THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

The idea of providence exercises many minds in these days, and the epithet 'providential' finds greater currency than usual. Sometimes by providential is meant merely lucky or fortunate; sometimes the use of the word implies divine overruling or divine intervention.

This latter meaning is often intended when the British evacuation at Dunkirk is described as a providential escape, or when the self-same description is applied to King George and Queen Elizabeth's security from harm during the bombing of Buckingham Palace. But it is not so clear that the idea of divine activity is implied in the following reference (in *The Illustrated London News*) to the bombing of a Hospital for Sick Children: 'Providentially not a single casualty occurred either among the young patients or among the members of the medical and nursing staffs—a fine tribute to the hospital's A.R.P. arrangements.'

And yet, despite the concluding words, the sentence may have been written from a standpoint of religious faith. Expositors have remarked that when religious faith asserts divine providence in any particular event, it is not afraid to use the language of paradox. Said Joseph to his brethren, who had actually sold him as a slave into Egypt, 'It was not you that sent me hither, but God' (Gn 45^{8}).

If we may not use the language of paradox in such instances then we must be silent, or else adventure forth in mind upon the task of resolving the great antinomy between divine governance and human freedom, between a God who overrules or intervenes and relatively independent creatures. Reason can move with a measure of confidence in the dimensions of time and space, but can it do more than reach forth, at best, to the dimensions of the unseen and eternal? And yet only if it can apprehend dimensional distinction, such as belongs to the sphere of the unseen and eternal, is it able to justify faith in divine providence on its own principles.

But, however theology or philosophy may handle the mystery of divine providence, religion need not remain dumb before it. As we have seen, it can avail itself (as reason cannot) of the language of paradox; it can express itself in terms seemingly contradictory. So far indeed from religion being dumb before the mystery, it can even rejoice in it.

When St. Paul in Romans ix.–xi. contemplates the record of God's dealings with Israel, and with the nations generally, he does not hesitate in mind over theoretical difficulties in the conception of divine providence; rather does he exult in the greatness of the mystery of divine providence: 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!' (Ro 11^{33}).

No doubt it is difficult to believe in God's good providence and, in particular, in God's personal concern for our human life when our skies are black and the clouds full of menace and no arch of assurance spans the horizon. But it is not quite so difficult if we can take our stand at the heart of the Christian faith.

St. Paul did not live under blue skies, amid sunlight, laughter, and flowers; his life was one of signal toil and hardship. But he lived under a deep and trembling consciousness of the love of God in Jesus Christ. He knew in the depths of his own experience how racked and tortured the human soul can be by the sense of guilt, and how vain it is to look around or within for deliverance. But he never forgot the day when he beheld the Divine Face looking upon him and heard the Divine Voice calling him by name, and he cast himself upon the Divine love and mercy, learning the joy and peace of forgiveness. It was his profound consciousness, mediated to him through the Lord Jesus Christ, of the wondrous grace of the Father in Heaven that was the source both of St. Paul's unswerving love of God and of his unswerving conviction that to them that love God 'all things work together for good' (Ro 8^{28}).

It should be added that the Christian belief in providence, to be rightly appreciated, must be set in the light of the Christian hope for the future. Just as our life in the present is not subject to blind mechanism or impersonal fate but is ruled and governed from beyond this world according to eternal purposes, so our fellowship here and now with the Everlasting Wisdom and Might is destined to issue in a truer and fuller life beyond, where He is, where no longer shall we know in part, or see as through a glass, darkly. So that the Apostle may well declare that 'the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us' (Ro 8^{18}).

At all times it is important to have a right thought of God, and never more so than at the present time of war and general upheaval. The faith of many in God is being severely tested and shaken in these anxious days. Frequently the reason is that they have a wrong thought of God, which simply will not fit the facts of the present situation.

Having this conviction the Rev. Vernon F. Storr, Sub-dean of Westminster, delivered a short course of lectures on the character of God as revealed in Nature, in history, and in Christ. These lectures are now published under the title of *The True and Living God* (S.P.C.K.; 2s. net). Distinguished by mature thought expressed with great clearness they ought to prove helpful to many.

It is not easy at first blush to harmonize our modern knowledge with what the Bible tells us of God. The Biblical writers had not our conceptions of the universe and the laws of Nature. Yet all this new knowledge which has come to us is God's gift, and if, as we cannot but think, He is the God of all truth there must be a way of co-ordinating all that He has revealed, whether in Scripture, in Nature, or in history, and of gaining through it some true idea of His character and purpose.

The writers of the Bible are all of one mind in declaring that God is a living God with a personality, a will, a purpose of His own. He revealed Himself at the first as the great 'I am,' self-existent and creative of all things, whose will would be progressively revealed in the experience of His people and whose purpose would be unfolded with the passing of the ages. This view of God and of His purpose gave to the Hebrews what amounted to a philosophy of history. They were the first to grasp the great idea that things are going forward to a grand consummation, and not simply going round and round in an endless and meaningless circle. The course of the stars, the succession of the seasons, the generations of men are all under the hand of God, controlled and guided towards the predestined end.

To the Hebrew mind the activities of Nature were the direct and manifest operation of God. He makes His sun to rise; He opens the windows of heaven and sends the blessed rain; He clothes Himself

with light as with a garment, and the thunder is His voice. 'When we turn to our modern thought of Nature we notice one great difference from the Hebrew thought, a difference expressed by the fact that we write Nature with a big "N." We no longer think of the activities of Nature as the direct, immediate, personal operation of God. We tend to think of Nature as a system of forces interposed between us and God, as a system which operates independently by its own laws. . . . I do not mind any one writing Nature with a big "N" if he does not make Nature independent of God. If Nature is independent of God, then God is not supreme. He is limited by Nature, and we have two ultimate principles, God and Nature, instead of only one.' Our gain in knowledge of the ways of Nature has doubtless been very great because we have not been content to assign every event to one First Cause, but have searched out and discovered secondary causes. But if in our exclusive search for secondary causes we have forgotten and excluded the Supreme First Cause, our loss has been greater than our gain. Do we not find in this one reason for the appalling chaos of the world to-day? Man has sought out many inventions but he has not sought divine guidance in the use of them, and they have broken loose from his control. Man, having discovered so many of the secrets of Nature, began to boast that he was 'the master of things' and could bend all to serve his will, and now he finds himself baffled and thwarted by the overruling will of God which he had left out of account.

Confessedly it is not easy to trace the hand of God in Nature and to see in it evidences of wisdom and love. Nature shows us two faces—the face of order and beauty and the face of chaos and disaster—so that its message seems to be a dubious one and capable of being read in opposite ways. But it is not fair, as many modern writers do, to look only on the dark side, to speak of Nature as 'red in tooth and claw,' to ignore the beautiful and look only at the ugly. For there is always in Nature, when left to herself, far more of order than of confusion, more of the joy of living than of the pain of dying. The Hebrews, though they did not theorize about Nature as we do, yet were gravely troubled by the problem of suffering. They could not understand it, and in the last resort they were thrown back on faith in God. And we also, for all our advance in the knowledge of Nature, must find our ultimate resting-place there. All that we have discovered of Nature is but an infinitesimal fraction of the whole. We are not competent to judge. Doubtless 'when God has made His plan complete' the meaning of it will be made plain. That is the great postulate of faith to which our souls must cling.

It is, of course, in history that the problem becomes most acute. What divine purpose of love and wisdom can possibly be discerned amid all the strifes and confusions and miseries of mankind? The Biblical writers are very bold in their treatment of history. They believed God to be in control of men and nations. 'Have I not brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir?' He raises up the Assyrians to punish Israel for their sins, and then He turns to rebuke Assyrian arrogancy and lay low their pride. We do not attribute events so directly to the hand of God. We bring into more prominence the fact of human freewill and responsibility for evil. The Bible writers, too, are well aware of this, for they have never been surpassed in their passionate denunciation of sin and in their insistence on man's personal responsibility to God. It is in their mode of expression more than in their thought that they differ from us. The relation of the human will to the divine is an insoluble mystery, but, however we express it, man cannot be relieved of his responsibility for the evil he has wrought and is daily working upon the earth. And if all the evils that have been done by wicked and foolish men were subtracted from the total it would make a very big reduction, and the world would then appear a vastly different place.

It is, however, when the Christ appears in history, lives a life of perfect love, dies for the world's sin, and rises triumphant over death that we begin to discern more clearly the character and purpose of the eternal God. 'As Christian people we should

see in this present turmoil of the world, not only the agony of humanity, but the agony of God. God's love cannot but be suffering from the human sin which has caused this strife, bringing with it cruelty and devastation unparalleled in history. We are meant to learn the meaning of sin, and the world's desperate need of reconciliation to God. But we are also meant to assure ourselves that the love of God is still patiently waiting to do its redemptive work, waiting to be creative of a new order, if we will allow it to be creative. That is the Christian's assurance; however dark the outlook, however the world may seem to be out of God's control, the Christian builds his faith on the historic facts, Calvary and Easter, and believes that all power belongs to Him who passed through the grave and gate of death and rose to victory, and that in the long run goodness will triumph.'

A great trial of faith is going on these days, and external supports for our faith are dropping away. It cannot look for support to a happy, prosperous social environment, for example, because the whole modern world is disrupted. Nor are democratic political institutions a sufficient support. Nor is there a sufficient support in our scientific culture. These are instruments for faith, but the faith that derives any of its strength from any such external props is bound to be shown as a feeble thing.

It is true that we may comprehend the events from the World War to these present tragic days as meaning, in the words of Berdyaev, 'the end of our time.' But this should lead us to study the significance of Christian faith for bringing forth a new time. We are indeed at 'the end of an era,' but not at the end of the Christian era. The eternal realities are also the most potent realities in the things of time. The trial of our faith, then, at a time when the existing order is decaying, includes a summons to lay hold on the eternal realities on which the formation of a new and better order must be based. It is such a situation that leads Dr. Eugene Lyman to consider the content of our Christian apprehension of God as the true way to gain aid for our faith in meeting the test of the present crisis.

Dr. Lyman is Professor of the Philosophy of Religion at Union Theological Seminary, and his contribution occupies the place of honour in the current number of *Religion in Life*, a quarterly published by the Abingdon Press. His article deals with the threefold conception of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. He does not look at these realities merely in a general or abstractly theological way, but always in direct reference to the religious crisis already described.

We must not think of God the Creator as mere Power, but as Creative Love. Nor must we think of creation simply as a solitary miracle in the past. It is a continuing miracle. God is creatively at work in His world. There is no reason for thinking of the natural order as a finished order. It is an ongoing process, in which God is creatively active and in which man bears a creative part, discharging a duty delegated to him by God. And this applies not only to the 'natural' order but to the moral order which God has brought into being and which He is continuously developing.

This is the point at which the trial of our faith is most acute at the present time. Naturally and inevitably the religious mind sees the hand of God in the terrible events of this time as a judgment on the world, a judgment on its evil works. But to accept such a view is to forget that the judgment of God can be affirmed only against the background of a faith that God is continually seeking to create a moral order in history. If God is not thus creatively at work in history then the calamities of our time are sheer meaningless catastrophes, and the law of the universe is the law of the jungle.

But if, under the present trial, we continue in the faith that God the Father is creatively at work in His world and in human history, and that His purposes are wrought out through those who give themselves to His will, then we can with confidence labour hopefully for a new Christendom. This may be distant in time, but it is not simply to be

waited for. It is to be pursued in the confidence that God will, in the end, 'win the game.' God is still creating, and He waits for us to do our part. 'Personally,' writes Dr. LYMAN, 'I find in such a summons a deliverance from that paralysis of creative thinking to which we are so likely to succumb in a world-crisis.'

We think of God as Redeemer through His revelation in Jesus Christ. What Jesus was in His compassion, His truthfulness, His lofty demands, and His unlimited self-giving love, that God eternally is. But if God is working redemptively according to the revelation of this nature in Jesus Christ, will not the first perception of that working come through the awakening in us of a repentance profounder than we have ever known before? And since the sins which have involved men in the present crisis are so largely corporate sins, must we not seek a corporate repentance?—repentance that in our own land of natural abundance whole classes are disinherited; repentance because our institutions, founded for freedom, deny the opportunity of work to multitudes; repentance that in our democracy the class struggle undermines the democratic principle.

And, as this deeper repentance is awakened in us, we shall perceive God's present redemptive working in every agency for the enfranchisement of the disinherited and in every espousal of the ministry of reconciliation among men. Indeed, there is no deeper knowledge of God's present redemptive work than that which can come through a present participation in a ministry of reconciliation among men. However small and obscure such a ministry may be, as compared with the great economic forces which are producing social conflict, or as compared with the great political and military forces which are bringing war upon each successive generation of men, such a ministry is not smaller or more obscure than was the Christian mission at the beginning. And with such a ministry of reconciliation we may believe that God Himself is working.

Finally, the Christian apprehension of God includes the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. And the most significant aspect of this work is the building up of a community of love. That is what the Christian Church has been from Pentecost to the present time. And that, extended to the whole world, is the hope to be cherished as the outcome of our present distresses. This World Christendom is now only a hope, but it is not entirely barren. 'What can the nascent World Christendom do in times like these?' asked Professor Van Dusen. 'It can moderate the bitterness of the conflict and alleviate its unspeakable suffering. It can maintain the bonds of living spiritual fellowship among Christians of contending nations. It can prepare the way for a just and enduring peace. Most important of all, it can preserve and even enhance the reality of world community.'

But this aim involves not only activities of world-wide extent. It must be realized in every local parish, where the spirit of co-operation and active love must receive practical expression which will send out filaments that will effect a sympathetic responsiveness to the whole body of humanity. In this hopeful spirit Dr. LYMAN concludes his survey. Its main burden is this: Our faith is in danger of bafflement and paralysis in face of the terrible outbreak of paganism, cruelty, and suffering of these days. The only deliverance from that danger, he says, is a new apprehension of the presence and power of God, as living, creating, redeeming, and reconciling, working even now towards a new humanity.

The Historic Church and Present Need.[1]

I. The Fall of a City.

By Professor John Foster, M.A., Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham.

I was half way to church when the sirens sounded. I opened my bag and took out my air-raid warden's tin hat, saying somewhat ruefully to the preaching gown which reposed below, 'It is not you I shall be wanting after all.'

Which things are a parable. The world in which we used to compose neat little theological essays and deliver them as sermons is coming down. Indeed it has already fallen.

Some of us had opportunity to recognize it earlier. A year before our own war started I came home one evening to find my little daughter in tears before the wireless set. The six o'clock news had just come through. She had heard the measured tones of the announcer say, 'To-day Japanese tanks entered the city of Canton.' Most of us heard it, and it meant another dot on a distant war-map. She heard it and it broke her heart. She was born there. It meant her nurse, her playmates, her friends. It is a privilege to begin life with the other side of the world in your heart, but it is a costly privilege when the world is going to pieces. I thought of our Lord weeping over Jerusalem—the fall of a city.

It has come nearer now: Warsaw, Oslo, Rotterdam, Brussels, Paris—a city? It is the fall of Europe before the barbarian. Still more, a world of ideals has come tumbling down. Some one remarked to me, 'I find our charwoman's morale excellent, but the minister is most depressing. It seems to have got him down.' *Væ victis!* Has the Christian gospel itself come down in the cataclysm?

During the time when I was a China missionary I used to find myself at S.C.M. and other student conferences at intervals of about six years. The intervals made more striking the changes in the idealisms of Christian youth. On one furlough I found that nearly all theologues had gone pacifist. A few collective-security men remained to keep me company, but most had gone the whole way of denying the use of force. How we argued about it!

It seemed to threaten the brotherhood of the ministry; it might even bring fresh division to the Church. And how much has either of our rival idealisms really mattered? That was in 1931, the year when Japan invaded Manchuria, and the series of betrayals began which were to show our collective system to be a hollow mockery. Other aggressions were to follow, ding-dong, east to west and back again, until now . . . down it has all come, like the fall of a city. Pacifists thought in those days that if war came, they would at least have the glory of some mild martyrdom. For the most part the tide of destruction rushes by, and leaves them with the less satisfying rôle of irrelevance.

Next time I came I was struck by the left-ward swing. Not so sure of their pacifism, the hearts of young idealists were in Spain. Some were even then ready to fight the Fascist. Communism was the fashion. I was almost shocked. It may have been conservative middle age creeping on. But China is a country where we had seen something more bloody than your theoretic redness. Christian communists! If you feel now that you have to swallow those words it must be hard to get them down after the sickening events of a year ago.

More of our ideals have turned out to be mere idealizations, and have withered among the ruins of East Poland and in the snows of the Mannerheim Line.

A better world, a juster society—what are we left with? Has our religion to crawl back into mere individualism, and take its place along with that other refuge, the Anderson shelter, in our own back garden?

There are those who say so, and bring an impressive theology to prove it. In one group at Tambaram we were discussing the function of the missionary. Some one suggested that we ought not to omit mention of his services as peace-maker, strengthening the foundations of international understanding. A Continental delegate protested: 'The foundations of peace cannot be laid. The life of the State cannot be made Christian. "The whole world lieth in the evil one." Everything must get worse and worse . . . until peace comes from above.'

[1] This is the first of a short series of articles which Professor Foster is contributing on The New Presentation of Church History and the Bearing of the History of Missions on our Modern Perplexities.

Some one passed round that ribald parody,

> Sit down, O men of God,
> His kingdom He will bring
> Whenever He desireth it—
> You cannot do a thing.

Perhaps by this time we have no laughter left for any one's despair.

Are we to submit to this religious pessimism, which even before the Nazi invasion, had captured the Protestants of the Continent? Are we to regard Christianity as that which prepares our hearts to greet His coming on the clouds of heaven?

The Christian life lived in separation from the world, rather than in influence upon it, with a hope which is altogether other-worldly, and as complete a handing over of this world-order to the devil, these are not upstart ideas without a history. There is a sermon which some day I should like to preach on—'The Fall of a City.' Start from Rabshakeh in 2 K 18, the challenge of the pagan aggressor: 'Who are they among the gods . . . that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the Lord should deliver Jerusalem?' Then Ps 137:

> How shall we sing the Lord's song
> In a strange land?
> If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
> Let my right hand forget her cunning.
> Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
> If I remember thee not.

The worst has happened: the Lord has not delivered Jerusalem. Then that other Man, who weeps for the city: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . Behold, your house is left unto you desolate' (Lk $13^{34f.}$). And then when again the worst has happened, when the armies of Titus have breached the walls, desecrated and destroyed the temple, and left only a huddle of ruins: 'I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. . . . And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it' (Rev 21). There, for first-century Christians, when the light had been put out, shone a transcendent faith which enabled them to go on.

What did it mean? There were from the beginning those who said that it meant separatist other-worldliness. But that, as we are coming clearly to see, does not take the full measure of Christian Apocalypse. Certainly it does not represent the main stream of the Church's life. Other-worldly Christianity is not the mark of the Catholics, but of the sects—Montanists in the second century and Donatists in the fourth. It finds what is to remain for a thousand years its most typical expression in the beginnings of monasticism. Every monastic revival is in some measure a renewed forsaking of the world. When we leave the Middle Ages, we find that this is the emphasis of Continental Protestantism. Our ancestors brought something of it home, first from Wittenberg, then from Zürich, Strasburg, Frankfort, and Geneva.

We whose spiritual ancestry has come by way of these movements have long ago departed from the tradition of our fathers. The Kingdom of God for which we have worked and prayed was one which was being worked out in the here and now. It ought to have meant our coming to a less one-sided apprehension, that is, a more *catholic* apprehension, of the Christian faith. Often it has meant that we have let go other-worldliness, and grasped nothing more substantial than . . . (shall we say?) a diffused 'social gospel' as that which was to be proclaimed, a vague Christian internationalism as Christianity's fulfilment in this world. No wonder our idealisms have come tumbling down.

I am always trying to persuade people, as a Church History teacher should, that you cannot appreciate Christianity, nor even understand our Lord, with the Bible alone. You need the Church. So now let us follow that theme, the fall of a city, into one period of Church History.

If you want an example of a naïve ending to a learned book read the *De Civitate Dei* of St. Augustine. It is rather a long way to read just for the ending; the English translation amounts to about half a million words. This is how it ends:

> 'Let those who think that I have said too little,
> and those who think that I have said too much,
> forgive me,
> and let those who think that I have said just
> enough,
> give thanks to God with me.—Amen.'

Well, Augustine, dear Father-in-God, I am one who thinks that you have said too much. Yet I not only forgive you, but give thanks. For of all the Fathers of the Church, none has more to offer to our present need.

The previous breakdown of Western civilization was at a time when the Church in the West was still young—the fall of Rome before Alaric the Visigoth in the year 410. The light of civilization was put out. The six hundred years which we call the Dark Ages began.

The news filled all men with foreboding and profound dismay. Jerome, the scholar-monk, heard it in his cell at Bethlehem. He was a monk and had

left the world, so might have been superior to the world's sorrows. But he was a scholar, and the triumph of barbarism was like a sword piercing his soul.

'My tongue,' he writes, 'cleaves to the roof of my mouth and my voice is choked with sobs, to think that that city is captive which led captive the whole world.'[1]

It is heartening to see how differently Augustine faced it. When the hearts of most men were sick with fear, this elderly bishop—he was approaching sixty—began to write a book. The book took him almost all the rest of his life to finish.[2] And it was called, not as an old man's book at such a time might well have been, Memoirs of the City of Rome, but *Concerning the City of God*. Let him describe its origin himself:

'After the storming and the sack of Rome by the Goths . . . my zeal was kindled for the house of God, and I was induced to defend the City of God against the calumnies and misrepresentations of its foes.'[3]

So from one of the world's most grievous calamities was born the Church's grandest apology. In some ways it is the most imposing and epoch-making apology of all time.[4]

It is impossible adequately to summarize this immense work in the space at our disposal. I want to draw attention to its relevance in two respects: Augustine says we must not let go our other-worldliness, nor must we be content with vague Christian idealisms.

Augustine begins by answering that inevitable question of times of calamity, 'Where is thy God?'[5] Some are saying that disaster has overtaken Rome because the Empire has forsaken its old gods for the God of the Christians. No, says Augustine. The fact is that the old gods could not have saved Rome. But Christianity, if it has not saved the city, has tempered the calamity in ways never seen before. The barbarians have respected the sanctuary of Christian Churches, and spared the lives of all, Christian and pagan, who fled for refuge there.[6]

Does not that remind you of those vast refugee camps on mission compound and college campus during China's three years of war? The invader there has withheld slaughter and rape, not indeed out of respect for the Christians' God, but because of British and American nationals in the missionary body. To Chinese it has been an immense object lesson—'see how these Christians love.' Christianity has tempered the calamity as nothing else could.[7]

It is true of the whole calamity of this war-torn world. The progress of scientific civilization may be neutral: We invent the petrol engine and then use it alike for the bombing plane, and for the motor ambulance, which bears away the victims. It may be wholly evil: It gives us the bomb, poison gas, the tank, the Bren gun. But how dreadful if among it all had not stood Christian men claiming some of our advancing knowledge for works of mercy—the anæsthetic, the surgeon's skill, the nurse's menial service sanctified, Christian 'big business' which organizes relief, Christians blessed with this world's goods who support the same. Christianity does temper the calamity.

But the major part of these first five books is not given to this argument. Augustine goes on to acknowledge that 'Good and evil suffer alike in this world, But though the sufferings are the same, the sufferers are not. . . . The difference lies not in the suffering, but in the way in which it is borne.'[8]

That is the first point: *Augustine recalls us to a proper other-worldliness.*

'They lost all they had. . . . But did they lose their faith? Did they lose their godliness? Did they lose the treasures of the heart? This is the wealth of the Christian.'[9] He chooses as an example one wealthy Christian who, in poverty after the barbarians had looted his home, was able to say:

'Lord, let me not be troubled for gold and silver, for where all my treasure is Thou knowest.'[10]

'It is not of importance whether life be long or short . . . but it is of importance how a man dies. . . . That death is not to be accounted a calamity which was preceded by a good life.'[11]

'The whole family of God most high and true has a consolation of its own, one that does not fail. . . . In this mortal life a man is trained for life eternal.'[12] We will not follow the argument as it is developed and illustrated through the rest of this part of the

[1] *Ep.* cxxvii. In justice to Jerome, compare *Ep.* lx, 'The Roman world is falling, yet we hold up our heads instead of bowing them down.'

[2] It seems to have been written between the years 413 and 426.

[3] *Retractions*, xliii.

[4] See *Monument to St. Augustine*, especially in the contribution by Mr. Christopher Dawson, pp. 72–77.

[5] Ps $42^{3,10}$, etc., quoted in Book I. 29.

[6] Book I. 1, 2.

[7] Well described, *e.g.* in *Christians in Action* (Longmans, 1938).

[8] Book I. 8. [9] Book I. 10. [10] Book I. 10.

[11] Book I. 11. [12] Book I. 29.

work. The importance for us here is that Augustine recalls us to a proper other-worldliness.

The second part, Books VI to X, is a defence against those who say that this other-worldly hope could be adequately provided by the old religions. It is splendid apologetic, presented with a wealth of inside knowledge. Augustine himself had come to the Christian faith by way of Neo-platonism, that fairest flowering of pre-Christian philosophy. It always strikes me with amazement that he did not feel that the urgency of the times meant concentration on merely practical Christianity to the neglect of dogmatic. Here you will go with Augustine deep down to the theological bases of the faith—while the Empire, while civilized life, is falling in ruins !

Then come twelve Books (XI–XXII) which really take up the main theme, the Two Cities. It is here that Augustine makes, from the point of view of our present need, his second great contribution. He does not leave us with mere other-worldliness. Let us begin with his own summary : ' The human race we have divided into two parts, those who live according to man, and those who live according to God, and these we mystically call the Two Cities.' [1] He traces this twofold division from the beginning of history : Adam has two sons. Cain ' builded a city and called the name of the city . . . Enoch.' [2] Abel is a shepherd with no fixed habitation, prototype of Christ the Shepherd of our souls.[3] It was the builder of the earthly city who slew the shepherd. Then comes the building of the tower of Babel, which he identifies with the city of Babylon. ' And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men built,' [4] and because they vied with heaven He brought their work to nought. Third, is Abraham,[5] who left a city with Lot. But Lot chose the city of Sodom, while Abraham waited for the fulfilment of larger promises. And so to Moses [6] and the separation of God's people from Egypt. In the period of the Kings there is the distinction between Saul and David ; the kingdom and the priesthood ; the division of the kingdom itself ; all of them signs of that perpetual division of temporal and spiritual which is to be made complete in Christ. In Book XVIII he turns back to point out the relation of all this to secular history : Assyria, Argos, Egypt, Athens, Troy, Latium, Rome, Persia, these with their mixtures of history and legend are the setting of the sacred story which gives them all significance.

Much of it may try your patience and seem altogether too fanciful to contain anything of permanent worth. But the point is that it is the first attempt at a Christian philosophy of history. Augustine is seeing all history with the purpose of God, *and the people of God*, central in it. And this while the world is going to pieces !

This is the implication of what he is saying : For three generations now people have been used to thinking of the Church as the State Church of the Roman Empire. But it is not. The Roman Empire is ' the earthly city which shall not be everlasting.' The Church is composed of ' sojourners in that earthly city whose citizenship is in the heavenly Jerusalem.' The Empire has existed in the purposes of God only for the sake of the Church. The Church has used the pax Romana, the Greek language, the Roman roads, the safety of the sea-routes. Now, if it has served its turn . . . Augustine is able to stand at the end of an age and look into the darkness. He is looking ahead to six hundred years of barbarism, to the slow emergence of a rough feudal society, as the new environment for the Church. For empires may rise and fall, world orders change, civilizations vanish, but ' the City of God remaineth.'

Can we face it ? We look into the darkness of a new age. We believe that the tide of barbarism will be stemmed and swept back. But even so, it will leave a Europe in ruins, an Empire impoverished ; the centre of commerce in London and of culture in Paris may never fully return from across the Atlantic. We do not know. But what we ought to know is that we belong first, not to Europe, not to the Empire, but to the City of God. We need to return from the diffused Christian idealisms, which before we sought first as His kingdom and His righteousness, to a higher Churchmanship. Christians must become again men who know what it is which claims and holds their ultimate loyalties, what it is for which they live, for sake of which they would be content to die, ' the Church which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.' [7]

[1] Book XV. 1. [2] Gn 4^{17}.

[3] Augustine's fancy is really more involved : Abel = ' grief,' and Seth = ' resurrection.' Faith in these, the passion and resurrection of our Lord, is set over against reliance on this world, Book XV. 18.

[4] Book XVI. 4. [5] Book XVI. 12 onwards.

[6] Book XVI. 43.

[7] Eph $1^{22f.}$.

Christ's Conception of Manhood.

'What is man, that thou art mindful of him?'—Ps viii. 4.
'Ye are of more value than many sparrows.'—Mt x. 31.

By the Reverend F. R. Tennant, B.Sc., D.D., Cambridge.

The Old Testament contains the history of the development of a religion from a primitive stage of crudity to the pure and lofty monotheism of the greater prophets: a development unparalleled elsewhere. The uniqueness of Israel's religious progress, as contrasted with the stagnation and ultimate extinction of the religions of other peoples nearest in kinship, or in international relations, to the Hebrews, is due to the fact that from early times the Hebrews conceived of Jehovah in terms of moral ideas, and of His covenant-relation with them as morally conditioned; whereas in the case of other nations there was little or no connexion between religion and morals. With the Hebrew religion in its prophetic and final stage Christianity, or rather the teaching of Christ (concerning God and His relations with mankind) is continuous. Those of us who are least inclined to regard our religion as consisting wholly of morality *suffused* with religious reverence and dogmatic beliefs will not demur to the statement that Christianity, however much more it may be, is one instance of ethical theism, or dispute that its ethical element is one of its most important constituents—indeed its most essential factor.

Religious thought, however, seems not always to have found it easy to realize that, once the conception of God and His relations with mankind has been moralized, or regarded as primarily ethical, some of the elements that were naturally and profitably included in pre-moral or imperfectly moralized religion can no longer be retained, on account of their incompatibility with the new—the dominant and transforming—ethical factor. Religion, in its wholesome anxiety to be as comprehensive and as conserving as possible, has been apt to cling tenaciously to anachronisms, and to afford lodgment for survivals such as are inconsistent with ethical requirements. Reverence for antiquity and for continuity can blindfold the eyes of the devout, in any age, to the unassimilableness of some of the inherited notions or beliefs which they cherish and would perpetuate. Such reverence may prevent them from seeing that the moralization of religious belief is comparable to the hatching of a cuckoo in the nest of a much smaller bird. And here, it may be observed by the way, is one of the differences between the habits of mind characteristic of science and religion respectively. Whenever science finds she has no further use for a hypothesis that formerly was of some service—such, *e.g.*, as that of phlogiston or that of the vortex-atom—she does not hesitate to abandon it once and for all, as outworn and untrue: consequently physical theory is, relatively speaking, uniformly progressive, and the household of science abides in peace. But religion has sometimes tacitly or explicitly retained the transcended and the outworn: as if the fact that such beliefs had, in earlier stages of religious development, met a natural human need or ministered to devotion, implied that they are for ever indispensable and entitled to a permanent place within a transformed system of ideas. Hence the progress of religious thought is liable to be interrupted. Stumbling-blocks are set up; and if reformations are not demanded by outraged consciences, the household of faith is sometimes disturbed by disputations between its more conservative and its more progressive members.

When Christianity is called an example of ethical theism it is implied that God is a moral being, that His revelation has a moral purpose, and that man's reception of that revelation is, in a large measure, morally conditioned; that religion is concerned with the worth and the moral freedom of persons, with the supremacy of moral values over all others, and with the realization of the moral purpose of God. These conditions must be satisfied if religion is to contain what is essential. Any doctrines or institutional practices, if there should be such, found to conflict with these ethical requirements, would call for remoulding or perhaps for purging as drastic as that which the Hebrew prophets administered to the popular religion of their times when it evinced hankerings after teraphim or high-places, entertained Baal-like or anthropomorphic ideas of God, or, content with externals and ritual, exhibited a deficient appreciation of moral service.

The ethical conditionings of the reception of reve-

lation or of divine influences, to which reference has been made, are established truths concerning the nature of morality itself; and they may here be succinctly stated, familiar though they may be. One of such truths is that beings endowed with the status of moral personality are not thing-like creatures but worlds apart from things. It is therefore difficult to believe that a personal God would deal with them as if they were mere things, automata, or impersonal beings. Any religious belief tainted with such an implication is thereby, and so far, rendered suspect. Another ethical truth is that moral character, strictly so called, cannot be other than self-made—*i.e.* formed by the agent's freedom or self-determination—however much its shaping may be assisted by example, suggestion, or instruction. Hence it follows that though we can conceive of divine influences of the impersonal kind, reaching our souls otherwise than through our personal—*i.e.* our rational and moral—apprehension, such as stirrings of the subconscious deeps of our minds, such bestowals of 'grace' cannot, of themselves, produce conversion or convey revelation: for revelation involves *our* apprehension, and conversion is *our* change of outlook. Such 'impersonal' soul-contacts as we can thus imagine cannot have any religious efficacy or value until, like a physical endowment, a social privilege, or a gift laid on our door-step, they have been freely or voluntarily appropriated and used. Again, freedom cannot be coerced—even by omnipotence—and yet remain freedom. Nor can it be evaded, like a sleeping sentinel. There can therefore be no soul-awakening or soul-saving that does not involve the co-operation of the human will. Not only our brother, but also our Father which is in heaven, must 'let that alone for ever.' Lastly, among the relevant pronouncements of ethical science, there is the assertion that the morally good will is a will which not only obeys the moral law but also reverences it. In other words, the good must be appreciated or *seen to be good* with the agent's own insight, and not merely be accepted on other men's recommendations.

If these several discernments are to receive the old name of 'private judgment,' then there can assuredly be no substitute for private judgment of this kind, and no dispensing with it. It is the distinctive privilege of man, *quâ* man or moral person. It is a trust committed to man by his Maker. It is man's crowning 'with glory and honour,' in virtue of which he is, in respect of endowment, 'but little lower than the angels,' and a being such that God can be 'mindful' of him, puny as is his magnitude in comparison with that of the stars and other works of His hand.

These deliverances of the science of morals are implicit in the teaching, and especially in the mode of teaching which was characteristically our Lord's, as it is described in the Synoptic Gospels. In His method of imparting religious truth we easily discern observance of them. We are told that Christ spake with authority; and His authority was not derived from authorities. But it is more to the point that His authoritativeness was not such as to override, or to dispense with, or to offer a substitute for, His hearers' free insight. As we read the accounts of Christ's delivery of His message, to what we may call His general public, we never find His attitude to be such as might be exemplified or summed up in the charge 'hear and obey'; we rather find it such as might be expressed in the words, 'See with your own eyes, understand, and acquiesce.' He did not teach or reveal in the sense of enforcing, or even inviting, mere acceptance of His own word without concurrence with it, or of truth 'ready-made,' so to speak. He rather would have men place themselves at His point of view and see what He saw with their own eyes. He let His teaching sink gradually into His hearers' minds until it should receive sincere assent from mind and heart, intelligent and moral, or personal, acceptance. The taking or leaving of His teaching was committed to the individual listener with his inalienable moral responsibility for accepting or rejecting. The fact that He delivered beatitudes and critical comments rather than laws, and parables rather than dogmas, shows that His aim was to elicit freedom of action.

Further, whereas many of the Pharisees of His day would seem to have required no more than overt compliance with the letter of the law, our Lord rather insisted on the paramount importance of the motive; intention to do evil, though prevented from actual fulfilment, was guilty; almsgiving, if performed with a view to ostentation, was not meritorious—and so on. He swept away the Pharisaic legalism as artificial and ethically pernicious, thereby insisting on the inwardness of morality.

Thus we may gather that our Lord's purpose was not to open out God's nature or His dealings with men in such wise as might satisfy the quest of the philosopher, but rather to open men's hearts to God's influence. To come to the Father, through Him, and to take His yoke upon us, is to be reconciled as Christ Himself was, to the Father's righteous will, and to find, as He found, that way to be the way of blessedness and peace.

It is a commonplace that, besides manifesting in His life and words the nature and will of God, in so far as those matters concerned human conduct, our Lord revealed 'what is in man.' It is perhaps not so commonly recognized how fundamental in His doctrine concerning the things of God is Christ's implied conception of manhood. Some points have indeed been adequately grasped, such as that our Lord brought to fuller light the potentialities of human nature, that He declined to assume the impossibility of moral recovery even in persons who had fallen lowest, that He showed up, by His own life and His criticisms, the hidden and unsuspected faults, perversities, and insincerities which often prevent us from seeing God, or which make us disloyal to what we have seen or believe. It has also been fully recognized that Christ exhibited in His own bearing the unlimited possibilities of human endeavour and attainment in certain directions: indeed many outside the Christian Church regard Him as the most attractive, and at the same time the most awe-inspiring, figure in history; for His moral purity and dignity evoke a reverence which to many is the most potent of all suggestions that we men are members of a supersensible kingdom, and is 'the means whereby they get their glimpse of the nature of that kingdom and its king.' These things, however, are by no means all that we can learn from Christ as to the nature of what Scripture calls God's child and God's image.

It has been remarked by more than one sympathetic writer that nothing has been subjected to such multiform and grotesque perversions as Christianity; and one might add that perversion of its Founder's conception of man has proved especially fertile in grim mockeries of the mind of Christ, some of which have been countenanced within Christendom. Self-abasement on man's part before his Maker has its wholesome form; but some pronouncements of Christian doctors are calculated to foster a kind of self-abasement which is pernicious to man and dishonouring to his Maker. There is no recorded saying or act of Christ which implies that man is so radically evil as to be incapable of any good impulse or volition unless his soul be first mysteriously wrought upon by a divine transaction of the impersonal or non-moral kind. Indeed, man without the innate capacity to do good as well as evil would be either a non-moral being or else a devil. Evil as men may become, they yet know how to give good gifts unto their children, and are sons of children of God. They are that, so far as we can see, not by metaphysical consubstantiality with the Father, or by any inscrutable mystical rapport, but in virtue of their reason and conscience—their moral personality. It is this dignity of manhood, the moral status, that Christ brought to light more clearly than any teacher before Him, both explicitly in His teaching and implicitly in His method of teaching. To human personality He assigned a value incommensurable with that of any other created thing. As He expressed it with some playfulness, men are 'of more value than many sparrows'; nay, the whole world weighs nought against a man's soul. Beings that are called sons of God in virtue of their innate capacity for free and filial, as contrasted with servile or mechanical, response cannot be dealt with by their Father as if they were stocks or stones. Reverence for man as man, moreover, is as essential an ingredient in the temper of a member of the kingdom of which Christ preached, as is reverence for God, though He alone is perfectly good. Indeed our Lord's teaching implies that the latter reverence is impossible without the former.

It may further be observed that His teaching concerning man and God's relations with him is capable of being appreciated without needing to be diluted or qualified, or to be supplemented by appeals to other sensibilities than those to which Christ actually addressed Himself. It has been well said that His teaching concerning God and man is the more sublime, profound, and universal, in that it strikes the elemental chords of common humanity and conscience, and these alone. And certainly if the common people heard Him gladly, and some at least of the sinners with whom He did not disdain to consort found Him attractive and inspiring, His sublimities could not have been above the heads or the hearts of the humbler among His teachable hearers. He addressed Himself to natural love or sympathy and moral sense; and by doing so He evoked a new response —the expulsive power of an affection which may be called respect for the 'man' in men and women.

A well-known writer has remarked that 'an eternal glory has been shed upon the human race by the love which Christ bore to it.' This writer avoided the liability of his word 'love' to be misunderstood when he went on to point out that Christ's love for mankind consisted pre-eminently of reverence for human nature, or moral responsibility, as such. We may recall, in this connexion, the question, 'Who is my mother, and my brethren?' and also the violently paradoxical or rhetorical saying about hating father or mother for His sake.

Whatever more our Lord's love for certain individuals —relatives and personal friends—included, in general it was, and could only be, esteem for them as sons of God: the sonship being constituted by their rationality and moral freedom. If the kingdom of heaven is, from one point of view, bestowed, from another point of view it has to be sought, with singleness of heart and concentrated effort. Entrance into that kingdom is by voluntary surrender to God's purpose and will. Adherence to Himself, without sincere acceptance of what He taught and stood for was accounted nothing by Christ. Lastly, reception of religious truth, He implied, consists in perceiving it to be truth: not in the seeing which is not one's own perceiving, nor in the hearing which is unaccompanied by assimilative understanding.

There are some persons with a genuinely religious bent of mind who find their spring of inspiration solely in these truths which Christ taught and also lived. There are others whose religious inspiration is derived from other sources—from doctrine which they deem to be more essentially Christian; but these may be counselled not to overlook, but to give a due proportion of consideration to what our Lord taught concerning the Father of Spirits and His relations with His children who are in His likeness in virtue of their moral freedom. If that teaching, by itself, yields no creed, it perhaps emits 'a light which illumines all the creeds.'

Literature.

JEWS AND CHRISTIANS TO-DAY.

Jews and Christians To-day: A Study in Jewish and Christian Relationships, by the Rev. William W. Simpson, M.A. (Epworth Press; 3s. net), has not only a theoretical interest, but also a practical value, not to be measured by its size; for into its pages the writer has compressed the essential material for a competent judgment, and a constraining motive to the solution of one of the most crucial and urgent problems of the hour. The conspicuous service that he has rendered, and is still rendering, towards that solution gives the book an authority that one by a spectator, and not an actor in the drama, would not possess. On its own merits the contents and the method of the book deserve commendation, and command confidence.

The first chapter deals with the persecution of the Jews in the Ancient World and in Mediæval Times, and with the Present Situation, due to abnormalities in the Jewish community for which Mediæval Christendom is responsible, and abnormalities in Christendom, the result of this initial inherited prejudice against the Jews. There are many victims of Nazi persecution still in Germany itself and the lands it has subjugated, and to which it extends its Antisemitism policy; but his account in the second chapter of the *relief of the victims* is necessarily confined to the refugees in other lands. As the causes of Antisemitism are mainly to be found in the traditional teaching of the Church about the Jew and his religion, it is the duty of the Church, the third chapter argues, to carry through an educational programme to remove the prejudice by refuting misrepresentations of the Jews, and by showing how much is common to Judaism and Christianity. The last chapter on *Jews and Christians To-day* seeks to show that they are exposed to a common danger and should draw together to offer a common resistance, that the weaknesses in the traditions of both can find correction the one in the other, and that, difficult as is the situation, there are movements on both sides towards conciliation and co-operation in common tasks.

Competent as is the treatment, there are a few points on which I venture to offer some corrective comments from a much longer and wider experience of the relation of Jews and Christians than the author can possess. While contacts between Jews and Christians should be encouraged (p. 60) the necessary exclusion of all proselytism does in some churches tend to weaken the missionary motive. On p. 68, in the author's own justification of Christian missions I cannot but detect a minimizing tendency. In my judgment the author does injustice (p. 72) to Calvinism in charging Calvinism with the dualism of Lutheranism, though in 'a lesser degree.' Much Protestant piety during last century was affected by an excessive individualism, but Calvin was a social as well as a religious reformer. The statement on p. 73 regarding Pastor Niemöller, a perfect example of this Lutheran dualism, is not accurate.

He was always careful to dissociate himself from any political opposition to the Nazi regime, and opposed it only for its invasion of the province of the Church, whose function is to proclaim the gospel in its purity. I cannot agree with the author's endorsement of John Macmurray's emphasis on 'the essential Jewish character of Christianity.' More is made than all the facts warrant of 'a new tolerance and breadth of outlook in the rise of the Reform and Liberal synagogues' (p. 81). Sharing the author's appreciation of what has been accomplished by the new Jewish community in Palestine, I should emphasize more strongly than he does the danger of political Zionism, both to the tranquillity of Palestine itself and to the anomalous position in which Jewish communities would be placed in countries where their members enjoy the privileges of citizenship. While I agree with him that 'the onus to take the initiative in seeking to put matters right' as between Christians and Jews 'rests on the Christian Church as an atonement for the wrongs Christendom has inflicted on the Jews,' I do not agree with him that it is not necessary to insist on a strict apportionment of blame 'to Jews as well as Christians,' as competent judgment must rest on adequate and accurate knowledge. If he had lived, as I have done, in a country in which the Jews exercised an oppressive economic domination, he would not so lightly have passed over the economic danger which offers a plausible excuse, but not a convincing reason, for Antisemitism. In his most admirable desire to show an abounding Christian charity and sympathy to the Jews, and to bring the Christian churches to repentance and amendment in their dealings with the Jewish community, he has failed to be strictly impartial—in the circumstances a venial offence to which I believe he would be ready to plead guilty. My main concern, however, is that the difference between Christianity and Judaism should not be minimized, and thus weaken the missionary motive to proclaim the name of Christ as above every name, because the name in which alone is the salvation which most fully meets man's needs and reveals God's nature as Father.

A. E. Garvie.

FATHERS AND HERETICS.

In *Fathers and Heretics*, the Bampton Lectures for 1940 (S.P.C.K.; 12s. 6d. net), the author of 'God in Patristic Thought,' the Rev. G. L. Prestige, D.D., puts us further in his debt with a masterly study of patristic Christology. Such studies abound, and often their dullness goes far to justify the prejudice with which the young student of theology approaches the history of doctrine. This acute and provocative evaluation of a classic period of Christian history is anything but dull however: more than the oft-told story of the logomachies of christological debate, it is a critical interpretation which has the merit of bringing out the abiding relevance of that debate to modern thought.

The book is as readable as it is learned. Opening with a prologue which affirms the dogmatic implications of Scripture as well as the Scriptural basis of theology, it goes on to discuss six dogmatic issues in terms of the great fathers and heretics with whom these issues will always be associated. Dr. Prestige's method is sufficiently indicated by his apt chapter headings. In 'Callistus: or, Faith in a Divine Saviour' he defends the evangelical practice of the Church against rigorist perfectionism. In 'Origen: or, The Claims of Religious Intelligence' he vindicates the emphasis placed by the greatest of the Alexandrians on human reason as a valid instrument of religious inquiry, and remarks that 'the flight from reason marks the first stage in the surrender of religion to intellectual nihilism and vulgar superstition' (p. 136). This is timely; but it must be read against the background of the fine passage in defence of Christianity as a revealed religion (p. 20 f.).

The four chapters respectively entitled 'Athanasius: or, The Unity of God'; 'Apollinaris: or, Divine Irruption'; 'Nestorius: or, Redeemed Humanity'; and 'Cyril: or, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism'—are the heart of the book. Most students of patristic Christology will find here a valuable supplement to the standard text-books. For though this is the exact and comprehensive work of an historian, its main function is plainly that of interpretation and vigorous apologetic as it surveys the unending attempt of the post-Nicene age to correlate the human and the divine in the Incarnate Word.

Incidentally, many a forceful epigram illustrates Dr. Prestige's vigour. 'We moral cripples cannot be made whole through a cripple more absolute than ourselves.' This is the heart of his criticism of Apollinarian heresy, and a good paraphrase of τὸ γὰρ ἀπρόσληπτον ἀθεράπευτον. Again, 'Nestorius was repudiated and degraded not because he originated a heresy but because he popularized a paradoxical version of orthodoxy.' Again, commenting on the Antiochene tendency to confess a duality in Christ (δυὰς υἱων), he says, 'if we admit for a moment the separate existence of two Sons, the work of Jesus ceases to be the work of God, Nazareth and

Calvary possess no deeper sanctity for us than Oxford University and Tower Hill, and God the Son has performed no essentially greater work in Jesus than He did in Moses or Isaiah. Some people think that this is indeed the case. But if they are right, the Christian Gospel is a fraud.'

Dr. Prestige's own position is evidently more Cyrillist than Chalcedonian. Indeed, if his pages show any technical weakness calling for a mild protest in the name of his own orthodoxy, it is his marked tenderness towards Apollinaris and the implicit monophysitism of Alexandria. Speaking of the Incarnation he says, 'Apollinaris devoted his life *and even sacrificed his orthodoxy* to the effort of defending this central and vital truth of the Gospel' [my italics]. And he adds that Apollinaris 'conferred far greater advantages on theology by his splendid orthodoxy than he caused damage by his tragic heresy.' Impartial in his criticisms and vindications, Dr. Prestige is nevertheless inclined to excuse Alexandria just where he condemns Antioch; he is rather like the staunch defender of the British Constitution who condemns a General Strike, but condones gun-running in Ulster. He dismisses the Christology of Theodore and Nestorius as 'a failure,' because it contributes 'no real solution to the problem,' and passes the same criticism, rightly enough, on Chalcedon; 'the real intellectual problem, namely, how two distinct and complete natures are combined in one Christ, remained unsolved.' But he fails to pass precisely the same criticism on Cyril, who himself insists that the 'how' of this mystery is ἄφραστος, ἀπερινοήτος and ἀποῤῥήτος (*Cyril ad Nest.* II.). Moreover, the crucial point is that these adjectives did not prevent Cyril from sacrificing the full reality of Christ's humanity. This is clear from his notorious sentence about Christ's ignorance: 'for the profit of His hearers He pretends not to know, in so far as He is man' (σκήπτεται χρησίμως τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι καθ' ὃ ἄνθρωπος, Cyril Alex., *Adv. Anthropomorph.* 14).

The epilogue entitled 'Eros: or, Devotion to the Sacred Humanity' traces the witness of specifically Christian mysticism throughout the devotional literature of nineteen centuries. It is a moving study marred, however, by a peevish onslaught on Calvin (p. 404 f.) which is almost comic in its downright error. We read that 'Calvin demanded of his followers a clean breach with historic Christendom,' a breach which was complete in devotion as well as in doctrine. 'He treats of the tremendous themes of Christ's manhood and of man's redemption without a trace of unction; these subjects seem to stir his feelings no more profoundly than the compilation of a series of trade returns might excite the bosom of a government clerk.' To any one familiar with the work of Seeberg or Karl Holl, not to mention that of Calvin, this is pathetic nonsense: but it is worth noticing that Calvin constantly appeals to *quod in veteri ecclesia observatum*; and that by *vetus ecclesia* he means not only the Church of the Apostolic Age, but the Church of the first five centuries *ante papatum*. It is noteworthy, too, that, speaking of the first four œcumenical councils he says *nihil enim continent quam puram et nativam scripturae interpretationem*. And, in spite of calumnies which persist, the evidence in his *Adversus Calumnias P. Caroli* is equally conclusive. Again, his high sacramental teaching leans strongly on antiquity for its support. He appeals constantly to Augustine and Chrysostom; to Cyprian, Jerome, and Gregory. Indeed, next to Augustine his most frequent appeal in the *Institutio* is to Bernard of Clairvaux, and even so not to the *De Consideratione*, but to that faith, evangelical and catholic, which is expounded in Bernard's Sermons on the Canticles. Dr. Prestige says much about Bernard in this last chapter. Calvin's similar interest is a strange comment on his 'clean breach with historic Christendom.' A great Anglican scholar recently described Calvin in his Bampton Lectures as 'the last and greatest of the Schoolmen.' It is a pity that Anglican scholars of a certain school are still so lamentably ignorant of what thirty years of research have been teaching us about the classic period of Reformation thought and practice.

J. S. Whale.

CHRISTIAN PACIFISM RE-EXAMINED.

Fortunately the question of Pacifism is treated with less heat to-day than in the last war. Accordingly *Christian Pacifism Re-examined*, by Professor C. J. Cadoux, D.D., D.Litt. (Blackwell; 12s. 6d. net), may expect to get in many quarters an unbiased perusal, and that is what it well deserves, for it is a very full and fair discussion of a complex and thorny subject. Of course its pages bristle with arguments and estimates of history against which readers may feel inclined to set marks of interrogation. But the writer has given prolonged and deep thought to every aspect of the subject, and he is at pains to do justice to his opponent's case. In this respect his book would make wholesome reading for Pacifists of the more extreme types. Throughout the whole of his lengthy exposition, however, Professor Cadoux never faces the ultimate question

of what would happen to a society in which the majority became Pacifist and left themselves at the mercy of a recalcitrant minority. He assumes throughout that such a contingency is not within the horizon of practical politics, but Kant has taught us that we must have regard to the universal application of our principles of conduct. His treatment might have been shortened, and perhaps improved, if he had not plunged into the whirlpool of contemporary politics but had kept to general principles in his argument. Some of his political judgments are highly questionable, and his comments on present-day events already out of date. But one would wish to pay the highest tribute to the writer's openness of mind and conciliatory spirit. 'The present situation,' as he truly says, 'is emphatically not one for mutual censure.' It is not a time for the Pacifist to withhold the fullest possible recognition of the rich element of good in the noble motives and unselfish strivings of those who disagree with him, or to hang back from the fullest possible co-operation with them in lending help and in bearing common burdens, so far as conscience allows. Nor is it a time for those who disagree to charge Pacifists with cowardice or neglect of duty or priggish assumption of superiority because they combine with their Pacifism such a relative justification of war as has been described in the preceding pages. On the contrary, the one line along which a closer rapprochement may be sought for with some hope of getting nearer to an ultimate synthesis of Christian judgment is the line of increasing mutual sympathy and understanding. J. H. Morrison.

Protestant Beliefs, by Mr. Paul Simpson McElroy (Abingdon Press ; 50 cents), might give the impression by its title that it was mainly controversial, but that is far from being the case. It is simply a little primer of Christian teaching. It gives a brief outline of Bible history, of Church history, and of the main doctrines of the Christian faith. It is written with great clearness and simplicity and contains for its size a wonderful amount of material. As a text-book for a junior Bible class it would be admirable.

A great crisis, like war, does, it is well known, tend to stimulate the production of verse, if not of poetry. The present war has markedly inspired the issue of many books of prayer, both original and collected. *Vision, Work, Service,* by Mr. Reginald W. Wilde, M.A., B.Sc. (Allen & Unwin ; 3s. 6d. net), has elements that are original and others that are not. It is described as 'a little book of meditation and prayer.' The meditations are on one page and the prayers face them on the other. The former consist of quotations from all sorts of authors, the latter are entirely the work of the writer himself. There is a very devout and sensible introduction consisting of counsel on the art of praying and the value of method. Then follow thirty-one divisions, one for each day of the month, each with its quota of collected quotations and suitable prayers. A book like this is bound to be helpful to any one who follows its advice and uses its pages as guides to his own devotions. There is nothing striking or original in the prayers. Perhaps that is a merit. But they are all deeply spiritual and may well aid the seeking soul in its aspirations heavenwards.

Sophia Sturge died on 17th January 1936 at the great age of eighty-seven. She came of fine old Quaker stock, her father being a notable philanthropist and friend of John Bright. Her whole long life was crowded with plans and activities for the promotion of human well-being. She organized local industries for basket-making in Connemara and toy-making in the Hebrides. She was naturally a Pacifist and champion of conscientious objectors. A memoir has been written—*Sophia Sturge,* by Mr. William R. Hughes (Allen & Unwin ; 5s. net)—which gives an interesting account of her noble character and long life of service.

A book of prayers which is highly commended by the Archbishop of York, the Rev. Leslie Weatherhead, and the Bishop of Chichester would seem to need no other commendation. This fortunate book is *Prayers of World Fellowship* (James Clarke ; 2s. 6d. net). It is anonymous, and consists of four orders of service, with additional prayers of various kinds, some responsive prayers and two meditations. We have read them with profit and pleasure. They will help to enrich both public and private worship. The prayers are (naturally) of various merit. Some are really beautiful, but not so beautiful as to distract attention from their purpose and proper use. Some are perhaps a little too 'modern' in their language, but these are few. One thing may be said of them. The book would be used by Germans as readily as by ourselves. There are no prayers for victory to our cause. When our leaders are remembered it is not for 'wisdom and high resolve,' but that they may remember their

responsibility to God. But 'world fellowship' may be said to cover and explain this.

Beyond the Facts, by the Rev. J. Richard Sneed (Cokesbury Press; $1.00), is a little book of seven sermons by a young American preacher of promise. These sermons are full of wise Christian teaching, lit by apt illustrations. The style, if not elevated, is pleasant and the tone persuasive. The subjects treated have a singular appropriateness in these days of worry and national anxiety.

Any preacher on the outlook for material for a course of sermons will find something suggestive and helpful in *Facing Life and Getting the Best of It*, by the Rev. Clarence E. Macartney (Cokesbury; $1.50). There are fourteen sermons in all and they deal with such topics as Getting the Best of Fear, of Temptation, of Loneliness, of Marriage, of Doubt, of Death, etc. To illustrate his points the writer makes an uncommonly full use of Bible incidents aptly chosen, but beyond that he draws illustrations from a very wide field. The sermons are fresh and up-to-date, while full of sound Christian teaching and pervaded by a fine glow of Christian feeling.

Dr. J. L. Neve, Hamma Divinity School, Springfield, Ohio, has published a solid and informative work entitled *Churches and Sects of Christendom* (Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa; $4.50). He endeavours to describe and characterize all Church groups of Christendom, not only those included in the official Religious Census of the United States, but those of other lands as well. He gives due and proportionate place to the great communions, nor do even the smallest communions pass through the mesh of his inquiry. His book is learned, theologically critical, and up to date (this last appears in an historical note and critical estimate of the Oxford Group Movement). If its appeal is primarily to readers in the United States, there must be many on this side of the Atlantic who would be glad to have it on their shelves as a work of reference.

The Strife Goes On, by the Rev. R. R. Williams, M.A. (Lutterworth Press; 3s. net), is a very useful and timely book. It is devoted to a study of spiritual conflict as depicted in the Bible and illustrated in human history. In the various chapters the writer passes in review the teaching of prophets and psalmists, of Jesus and His apostles, showing how all of them were profoundly conscious of an age-long cosmic struggle between good and evil. This is followed by a study of some of the early Fathers, especially Augustine with his 'City of God.' Then we have a chapter on the poets in their treatment of the great conflict, and finally a chapter on the spiritual meaning of the present world war. The book is remarkably clear and orderly, sane and persuasive.

Christ Interpreted, by the Rev. C. H. Nash, M.A. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 3s. 6d. net), is a short commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, but a commentary of a somewhat unusual type. A fresh translation in modern English is given of each section, and is followed by explanatory notes. The translation without being brilliant is careful and lucid. The commentary, while both exegetically and doctrinally sound and helpful, does not attempt to maintain the judicial calm which usually characterizes the modern commentary. It is preaching of a very pointed and personal kind. The writer would no doubt argue with great show of reason that St. Paul's passionate argument calls for passionate exposition, and certainly this little book makes the Epistle a living and appealing thing.

The Rev. Donald Davidson, B.D., B.Litt., Ph.D., has published a score of short war-time addresses under the title *In Righteousness Make War* (Marshall, Morgan & Scott; 3s. 6d. net). These addresses were given at weekly services of intercession, and have a very direct bearing upon the world tragedy of the hour. They are decidedly outspoken, for Dr. Davidson is passionately convinced of the righteousness of our cause, of the devilish malignity of the forces opposed to us, and of the duty of resisting them to the uttermost. His condemnation of the Pacifists for weakening national effort is severe. But, most important of all, there runs through these addresses a powerful presentation of Christian truth, an earnest call to penitence and prayer, with an invincible faith in the triumph of the cause of God. For the preacher in search of timely themes they are full of suggestion.

Dr. G. G. Coulton, whose diligence and ability in historical research are beyond praise, has published an interesting and most useful work designed both for the student of mediæval Latin and for those of the general public who are interested in mediæval education and its relation at once to the Latin tongue and to the French or English vernacular. His book, *Europe's Apprenticeship* (Nelson; 8s. 6d. net), falls into three sections. The first deals with

the Latin Background and shows with ample learning how the Church came to realize that in imposing Latin upon Western Europe she had made for herself a difficult task; so seldom was the mother-tongue really dethroned. Reference is made in particular to the growth and subsequent revolt and victory of vernaculars. The second section treats of mediæval Scholarship and is informative upon the educational system. The third section, which justifies the claim made for the volume of being a source book, contains many well-selected examples of mediæval Latin (with English translations alongside of them), ranging from the Vulgate Bible to the Franciscan, Michel Menot, one of the last mediæval mission-preachers. As to subjects, the author tells us that he had leaned towards those which throw direct light upon mediæval education, Church faith and discipline, or primitive manners and customs.

To most readers the Apocryphal Gospels are little more than a name. They are not readily accessible and only a few of the more extravagant stories are quoted in popular lives of Christ by way of illustrating their inferiority to the Canonical Gospels. A fair sample has now been published, *Readings from the Apocryphal Gospels*, edited by Mr. Hugh J. Schonfield (Nelson; 5s. net). These readings are drawn from the Book of James, the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew, the Gospel of Thomas, and the Gospel of Nicodemus. In a brief but admirable introduction the editor claims that the Apocryphal Gospels have a threefold value, first as throwing light on the spiritual outlook of the early Christians, second as revealing doctrinal developments and changes in policy, and third as preserving remnants of independent tradition about the life of Christ. The extracts, which deal mainly with the early life of Jesus and with His death and resurrection, are well selected and make interesting reading.

Dr. Graham Scroggie has published the second volume of his series *Know Your Bible: A Brief Introduction to the Scriptures* (Pickering & Inglis; 8s. 6d. net). These two volumes are analytical, the former dealing with the Old Testament and the one now issued dealing with the New Testament. He hopes to follow them up with other two volumes, one treating the Bible synthetically as the drama of redemption, the other expounding some Biblical values. In the volume before us we have brief introductions to each of the books of the New Testament with an analysis of their contents. The writer steers a middle course between the excess of the Fundamentalist on the one hand and the defect of the Modernist on the other. While conservative in tone the book is written with fairness and insight, and it ought to prove a useful guide to the average serious reader of the Bible.

Are the churches being deserted? Is preaching better or worse than in former times? What is the function of the Church in public life? Have we many great churchmen to-day? These and other interesting questions are answered in a remarkable book which kept one reader so fascinated that he could hardly lay the book down—*Inquiring Christian in England*, by Mr. Norman Hillson (Religious Book Club; 2s. 6d. net to members). It is based on a series of articles which appeared in the Monday *Daily Mail* for about a year. They were signed simply 'Enquiring Christian.' Each one gave a vivid sketch of some religious service which the writer had attended the previous day. The book, however, presents a more systematic purpose. It begins just before the 'Munich Crisis' in August, 1938, and from that time we are carried through the anxious months till the outbreak of war, not with political discussion but with a picture of the nation at worship. Sunday by Sunday Mr. Hillson visited churches and listened to preachers of all creeds and, in some cases, of none. And there he found the spirit of the nation reflected. He says somewhere that if historians wish to know the thoughts of the British nation through these months of strain, they would do well to study the attitude of churchmen of all denominations as defined in their spoken word delivered from the pulpits of the land.

Not that he heard many political sermons. He listened to over a hundred discourses and heard the name of Hitler only once! But he discovered the soul of Britain in the people's churches. And he discovered something that will surprise some readers, a very high average of preaching everywhere. He has criticisms to make, but they are insignificant beside his honest appreciation of the pulpit of the present day. For the rest, it should be said that no sect or body of Christians was neglected, from St. Paul's to a small Nonconformist chapel in Wales, from Westminster Abbey to the Christian Science and the Salvation Army. He worshipped in St. Giles, Edinburgh, in the King's Parish Church at Crathie, in the City Temple, in 'The Iron Duke,' and in scores of other places, and on each occasion we are given a pen-portrait of typical preachers and the kind of service they conducted. As has been already said, the book is one of engrossing interest, and the author is to be admired for the

catholicity of his spirit and his power of seeing the good and valuing it wherever he went.

Sunday Afternoon, by the Rev. Hugh Caiger, first published in 1938, has now been completed by a second part—Advent to Whitsuntide—and the whole may be had in one volume (S.P.C.K.; 5s. net). It contains altogether fifty-two children's services, complete with address, prayers, lessons, and hymns, suitable for the fifty-two Sundays of the Christian year. Wall-pictures to illustrate the lessons are suggested and may be had at reduced rates. It is the writer's conviction that the usual religious instruction given in the Sunday School 'is obviously failing, in far too many cases, to train the young to become worshipping Church people.' As a substitute for the Sunday School an afternoon service is here suggested at which 'the clergyman, or a competent layman, will have all the children in Church—except perhaps the very youngest, together with as many adults as care to come.' Whether one agrees with this proposal or not, any teacher of the young will find here a series of carefully thought-out services with a wealth of practical suggestions.

Supreme Encounter, by the Rev. Basil Mathews (S.C.M.; 6s. net) has for its sub-title 'The God of History in the World of To-day,' but it is far more Biblical than this description would suggest. This is said in no spirit of disparagement. Quite the contrary. It is simply intended to give prospective readers some idea of what they may expect when they open the book. The fourteen chapters might fitly be called sermons—sermons of a carefully exegetical and highly practical style. The purpose of the writer—or should we rather say the preacher?—is to trace the age-long conflict of good and evil as it is depicted in the Bible and illustrated in the crisis of to-day. Hence we have a detailed and vivid exposition of the teaching of the Old Testament prophets which is so singularly apt to the problems of our time. Then follow studies of the significance of the person and work of Jesus Christ, of the Pauline Gospel, and the apocalyptic visions of the final overthrow of evil and the triumph of the Kingdom of God. It is a strong and vigorous book. Any preacher who wishes, as every preacher should wish, to match Bible truth with the present world-crisis will find here abundant guidance and inspiration.

A very earnest and sincere book of devotional meditations has been written by the head of the Department of Philosophy in the University of Georgia, William Hazer Wrighton, with the title *The Glory of His Grace* (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids; $1.00). The title indicates clearly enough the nature of the discourses included in the book. The contents are in the Puritan tradition, and the dedication is appropriately made to Thomas Goodwin. We seldom hear such sermons on this side of the water, but it is good to hear the old theology preached not only with fervour but with sincerity and power.

The study of the technique of preaching ought to be the aim of every minister. Many an otherwise good sermon fails to make its appeal through lack of the artist's patient skill. *Expository Preaching*, by Professor Jeff D. Ray (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids; $1.00) is a work which brings this home to us. Its author does well to stress the saying of Wordsworth, 'That which comes from the heart goes to the heart,' and to stir the reader to what Sylvester Horne called 'the royalty of the pulpit.' He shows the steps to be taken in interpreting a text and the advantages of expository preaching. He stresses the claims of a literary instinct, and the added power given by a student's real knowledge of the value of words. He invites us to a truer historical and dramatic imagination in survey of the Bible. He believes that there never was a great preacher who was not a great expositor. The author argues for more independent digging, and that a sermon be preached before it has lost its spiritual glow. Great preachers, such as Alexander Whyte, would be inclined to differ from Dr. Ray when he urges us to *forecast* the contents of the discourse. For there are some who plead that it should be full of surprises like the unfolding of a flower, or the course of the flight of a bird. There are certain pardonable Americanisms in this valued volume. Yet a preacher cannot rise from perusal of these essays without a deeper devotion to his calling, and an added yearning to make the most of his explorations of truth. The book sends us back to the Greek Testament, and by the instances the writer affords of the deeper meaning of the text he helps to make preaching more vital and with a more marked alliance with daily life. This is one of the great truths which Principal Caird's marvellous contacts reveal to us. The author has much to teach us of the regal art.

Some Thoughts on the Atonement.

II.

By the Reverend David S. Cairns, D.D., Emeritus Principal of Christ's College, Aberdeen.

II. *The Sacrificial System.* There is another great region of Jewish thought and life from which St. Paul draws figures and analogies to explain the Cross. That is the region of Temple cultus. Christ's death is a sacrifice, an offering for sin. The Apostolic use of this imagery dates back to our Lord Himself, for He used the figure of sacrifice at the first institution of the Supper, and the words must have been repeated at every primitive observance of the feast and so have been very familiar to all Christians. 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins.'

Now what was sacrifice understood to be? It is obvious that this is of the utmost importance if we wish really to understand New Testament thought on the death of Christ. Supporters of the forensic theories have endeavoured to assimilate sacrifice to forensic procedure by maintaining that the blood sacrifices were sacrifices of substituted victims, the animal bearing the penalty rightly incurred by the human sinners. In this way the incongruity between the Temple cultus and a court of law was, it was supposed, taken away. But modern investigation does not bear out this view of sacrifice. Not to speak of the fact that the sacrifice to which our Lord at the Supper paralleled His own was not one of the sacrifices known as sin offerings, even the sin offering to which St. Paul compared the death of Christ was not a *penal* victim. It was an offering of an animal life to God, in virtue of which God 'covered' the sin. That is to say God appointed this as the way whereby repentant but guilty men could recover their standing in His covenant of Grace. It was fundamentally a grace ordinance, not a penal infliction on a substitute. It showed that the man's repentance was genuine, for he made a cost in order to perform it. By making this *amende* in the way appointed by God's grace, he received His grace anew. I do not think we can fairly read more into the frequent 'altar language' of the Pauline epistles, in their references to the Cross, than this.

The sacrifice of Christ is an offering by virtue of which God in His grace can 'cover' sin. No rationale is given, but the fact is stated.

Singly or in combination these two metaphors form the heart of the great majority of the passages in which St. Paul refers to the atoning death of our Lord.

We have a striking example of the combination of these two types of metaphor in a passage which has been traditionally regarded as one of the main strongholds of the penal substitution view. Ro 3^{24-26}, 'Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, by his blood, to shew his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for the shewing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.' We have here on the one hand the imagery of a court of law and a last judgment, and on the other, the imagery of the Temple cultus and the sin offering.

What is the underlying thought of the passage? In advance of the Last Day of Judgment God has intervened—by the death of His Son as a sacrifice for sin. Plainly the thought is that He has so manifested Himself in that Death that it may stand in lieu of the Last Judgment, so that they, who by faith grasp what He has done, are here and now acquitted or 'justified.' The Last Judgment in their case has been forestalled, sidetracked, and transcended, the fatal barrier against free communion with God has been removed by the Cross. They who believe have now only to do with the forgiving Father and not with the condemning Judge. The other barrier of which I spoke has gone too. How can the pure and perfect God commune with sinful man? In the same Cross God has taken the supreme initiative and maintains it by His Spirit. The barrier is removed, and God Himself has removed it. Communion with Him has been made possible because He communes with us. 'Wherefore,' as the Apostle elsewhere says, 'we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have the reconciliation.'

To St. Paul the purpose of the death of Christ was to show God's righteousness which had been obscured by His long silence. The world had been full of outrageous wickedness and misery, and yet

God had been silent and inactive. That passivity of God had really been due to His forbearance. But that forbearance had looked desperately like indifference or impotence. Now that misunderstanding had been completely taken away. He had sent His Son, His Son had died on the Cross and had risen again and sent forth His Spirit. There had been a veritable Apocalypse of God breaking through the mist and the silence. Heaven itself had opened and a flood of light had been poured out on the dark mystery of human life, the light that disclosed the purity and love of God, the true nature of the sins of man, the mystery of iniquity, and the whole mystery of man's sufferings and death as the result of his inward divorce from the life of God. Paul does not refer in this particular passage to the Resurrection, but that it was part of the revelation to him is certain from other passages. 'He died for our offences and was raised for our justification.' The result of that whole Apocalypse was the manifestation of the righteousness of God. It is on this passage above all, as I have said, that the substitutionary and penal view of the Atonement is based, because righteousness is thought of in a very narrow way as the infliction of penal suffering in satisfaction of the claims of rigorous justice. But full investigation of the meaning of the word 'righteousness' in the Old Testament writings does not bear out this view, any more than it bears out the penal theory of sacrifice which, as we have seen, is another of the foundation stones of the penal theory of the Atonement. Space forbids me to go fully into the most recent and thorough of the examinations of the word 'righteousness' in the Old Testament, but I may cite in support of this cardinal point of interpretation two sound Old and New Testament scholars. In an article in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary* on 'Righteousness in the Old Testament' Principal John Skinner, perhaps the foremost Old Testament scholar of his time in our country, writes as follows: 'It is evident that the Old Testament writers know nothing of the sharp contrast often drawn by theologians between the righteousness and the mercy of God. Righteousness and saving activity, so far from being opposed to each other, are harmonious principles of action in the Divine nature; Jahveh is a righteous God *and* a Saviour.'

Commenting on the passage from Ro 3 already quoted Professor Dodd says, after examination of the conception of 'righteousness' in the Old Testament: 'The meaning, therefore, of the phrase "God's righteousness is revealed" might be given by some such paraphrase as this "God is now seen to be vindicating the right, redeeming the wrong and delivering men from the power of evil".' He sums up the argument of the Apostle in the words: 'The life and death of Jesus Christ, His resurrection and the creation of the Church by His Spirit constitute a decisive act of God and objective revelation of His righteousness.'

The drift of the whole passage, as I understand it, is that the Apostle regards the Cross as a great historic and even cosmic event which once for all removes the mystery of God's apparent indifference and inaction and secures the 'justification' or acquittal of all who will accept it for what God means it to be. The use of the word 'acquittal' implies acquittal at the Last Judgment, and the inference is inevitable that in some way Paul believes that the Cross of Christ stands in lieu of the Great White Throne. Christ by His atoning death on the Cross has done something which makes that Judgment Day unnecessary for all who believe in Him. He has completely vindicated the moral character of God. We shall therefore, as I have said, be true to the heart of the Pauline thought if we can show that the Cross of Christ reveals with the same clearness as does the Last Judgment that God is not indifferent to good and evil, that He is 'righteous,' which, as we have seen, is the essential motive in the rise of the Hebrew and Jewish faith in judgment to come.

But surely we can say that it does this with far greater clearness.

Tremendous as is the imagery of the Last Judgment, how much it comes short of dealing with the whole tragedy of human sin! No figure of thought borrowed from courts of law can adequately express the full content of man's relation to God and God's heart and purpose towards men. The whole tragedy of man's apostasy from his Creator and Father, the love and sorrow, as well as the condemnation of God, cannot without violence be forced into these forensic moulds. We may feel that we cannot but use them, for they contain profound truth, but as we use them we feel their inadequacy. The realities cry out for some more perfect form of expression, and surely we get this in the Cross and Passion of our Lord. For here we have revealed, first of all, that which is fundamental, the Grace of God. To St. Paul, be it remembered, the Crucified was the eternal Son of God, who for us men and women and for our salvation, 'had laid His glory by, had made Himself of no reputation, had taken upon Him the form of a servant, and had become obedient to death, even the death of the Cross.' God Himself

had not merely come to man in his sin and misery in love and pity by the Incarnation, but had endured, suffering shame and death for his sake. The Cross is the sovereign revelation of the creative, forthcoming, initiative love of God Almighty—'the love that moves the sun and all the stars.' That assuredly comes out in the Cross of Christ, incomparably better than it does in the imagery of the Great White Throne.

But, in the second place, if the Cross is the sovereign manifestation of the love of God, it is also the supreme manifestation of the sin of man.

If it was the best thing, that so far as history goes, God ever did, the story of the Cross is a pitiful tale of human weakness, cruelty, self-seeking, and unbelief. We may surely say that it is the worst thing man ever did. Rome and Israel alike break down at the Cross. All that great Rome can do is to put Pilate, all that Israel can do is to put Caiaphas, in the places of power. Even the disciples fail their Master, and only He remains unbroken as He goes to His cross. That mankind should have so used its greatest and purest Figure is a supreme revelation of the moral evil of the human heart. That He who was the Son of Man was also Son of God makes it the supreme manifestation of sin. It is an Apocalypse at once of God's Love and man's sin. These are bound together inseparably in the Cross of Christ, and here is the marvellous thing, each reveals the other to its inmost heart. On the one hand, the sin of man reveals the Love of God. In spite of all the pitiful weakness and detestable iniquity of man revealed in the Crucifixion, God loves man. In His prayer for His murderers, Jesus reveals the grace of the eternal Father towards Pilate, Caiaphas, and Judas, and all the dim multitude of humanity who crucify Him afresh. The motive of creation, as well as redemption is revealed in that Cross and Passion. Paradoxical as it may seem, had it not been for the utter breakdown of mankind in that supreme hour of its testing, we should never have known the fullness of the grace of God. It is the supreme example of the weakness of evil and the power of God, that He can use even supreme evil for the supreme manifestation of His Grace.

Yet while the sin of man reveals the Grace of God, it is also true that the Grace reveals the sin. It is against such Love that man sins. He will not believe in such love, for he is incapable of it himself. He thinks it too good to be true. If it were true he knows that he would have to break out of his selfishness and pride, and he cannot face that utter break with his own lower nature. He will rather slay his God than yield to Him.

It is against this splendour of Divine pity and grace that we see sin for what it actually is—unbelief in the sovereignty of the Highest and Greatest, with the resulting brood of evil passions, selfish ambitions, pride, cruelty, and hatred, that brought Christ to His Cross and that crucify Him afresh in the world to-day, and that still have their hold even on us, who call ourselves His disciples and who write and read these words.

Both these realities, the sin of man and the Grace of God, are revealed to us by the Cross, and we cannot have the one revelation without the other, for, as I have said, each reveals the other.

In this way, have we not in the Cross something which brings home to those who can see it the true inwardness of the whole spiritual situation, as between God and man, something much deeper and richer than even the tremendous imagery of the Great White Throne, and something therefore which warrants Paul in speaking of judgment as being transcended by the Christian, and in therefore describing the forgiveness of God as an acquittal, a 'justification' of the unrighteous?

But, in the third place, we have not exhausted the meaning of the Cross for him if we stop at this point. With nearly all the New Testament writers (the Epistle of James is, I think, the only exception), he lays great emphasis on the actual Death and Resurrection of Christ as part of His atoning work.

All through the Bible there runs the idea that there is an organic relation between the sin of man and the sufferings and tragedies of outward circumstance that befall him, or that befall others because of his sin. I cannot at the close of this article go into this subject, as for completeness I ought to do. As I have indicated by its title, it is only meant to be a very partial discussion of the subject. But I believe that to-day Christian thought on the subject needs to be greatly strengthened by a return to Scripture. I cannot look out upon the world to-day without feeling that its sufferings are to a very large extent the consequences of its sin, and that every sin works itself out in tragic consequences, not only for the sinner, but, by virtue of the great vicarious law, for others as well, and that this is true not only for the life to come, but for the life that now is. Certainly that is the Biblical view of the matter, not only of the Old Testament but also of the New. It is quite possible to hold this view of Sin and Death and yet to believe that in some instances the Biblical writers may have erred in their application of it. In this matter,

especially in the Old Testament, we have the correction supplied in the Book of Job, with its magnificent protest against the misapplication of the principle by the three 'comforters.'

But that sin always works woe and death in God's world seems as true to-day as ever it was. There is a moral order in the world as certainly as there is a physical order, otherwise there could have been no moral education of the human race. In the death and resurrection of Christ, the apostolic writers find this moral order revealed. By virtue of the vicarious law, our Lord can enter into the sinful and dying world and bear thereby the consequences of the sins of all His brethren, and by His resurrection can give the supreme proof that He who has revealed Himself as Love has also the Power to make His Love prevail. And this last point, the revelation of His power guarantees the final overthrow of all evil.

Thus He dies for our sins, but as I understand the matter, He dies as a consequence of our sins, and not as a penal substitute for us. He died as a mother may die for her child, or a patriot for his country, by virtue of the vicarious law which knits the whole human race together in a living whole.

To sum up, then, what I have been trying to say, the atoning work of Christ is fundamentally *one of Revelation of the Grace of God, of the sins of man, and of the moral order of God's world, but supremely of the Grace of God.* It is in essence the Divine revelation of ultimate spiritual reality.

It is from beginning to end a work of God, 'reconciling the world to himself by His Son, not imputing to them their trespasses.' It is an Apocalypse of the Grace of God and the sin of man of so radical and far-reaching a character as to lay broad and firm the foundations of a new life for men. His Cross, moreover, reveals the hidden moral order. It discloses the moral purpose of God in the disciplinary place of suffering and death in His universe.

I remember twenty years ago spending a long afternoon and evening alone in the terrible Salient in Flanders. It was during the Armistice while the German prisoners were finding and burying our dead along the long bare ridge of Passchendaele, and the whole landscape was still desolate and riven with shell to the horizon. Two truths came home to me with irresistible power on that great Aceldama, the splendour of sacrifice, and yet along with it the inevitable conviction that something in human life had gone utterly wrong and that I was moving among signs of the judgments of God. A whole age had here been judged, an age of civilization splendid in many ways and yet deeply stained with self-seeking, avarice, and pride. Sin had wrought Death, and the generation that had here given up its youth was a vicarious generation bearing the iniquities of many past generations and laying down its life for many yet to come under that twofold law by which sin always works death and men bear the sins of others even as they profit by their virtues. Of that moral order by which God fashions human souls the Cross is the supreme Revelation, and it is surely of deep meaning that to-day in all the vast cemeteries of our dead in Flanders there stands the great symbol of our redemption. Yet, while the Cross reveals the depth of human sin and the reality and austerity of the moral order, these do not prevail against the glory of the Divine Love and Compassion. Rather do we discern in the Crucified the final Conqueror over Sin and Death. For the very evil and tragedy of it all only bring out with increasing glory the Grace of Him against whom men sin. Sin itself becomes a means of the revelation of Divine Love. And the whole story moves on to the triumph of life over death in the Resurrection and the coming of the Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, with the assurance which these give that Power is behind Love and that Love will triumph at the last.

> O love of God! O sin of man!
> In this dread act your strength is tried,
> And victory remains with love:
> Jesus, our Lord, is crucified!

In a word, in the Cross of Christ and in His Resurrection we have God telling us His whole mind and heart about our condition and the human situation and His all-embracing and victorious grace. It is thus in itself an objective 'finished' Divine work of redemption wrought by God Himself. Its appropriation by faith brings us gradually into ever-deepening relations with Reality, that is to say, with God Himself and with His world and our fellow-men.

Had space allowed I would have endeavoured to show that in the Revelatory view that I have tried to develop, we have affinities with all the great historical theories of which I have spoken at the beginning, except perhaps the Satisfaction theory. The truth in the Ransom theory is that it exhibits God as the Saviour from Sin and Death. I have often thought that the original form of the Penal theory of a substitutionary victim, though as I think, quite untenable, if we are to take it in its rigid forensic form, punishment being transferred from the guilty to the innocent, may be transformed,

if we take *all punishment* whether inflicted by man or by God as revelatory, penalty being simply that which is appointed to bring home to society and to the guilty party, the real nature of his offence. This was in effect what Grotius did in the Governmental theory. But what the Moral theories have added to the Grotian view is their far deeper account of the love of God, and their far more spiritual conception of the sin of man. The view which I have outlined is thus an endeavour after a synthesis of the enduring elements in the great theories of the past. It can also claim to be broadly grounded in the whole Bible. And, finally, it shines by its own light. But that it exhausts the great theme I should not think of 'asserting.' Into these things angels desire to look!

The Relevance of the Old Testament Prophets: Isaiah.

By the Reverend E. C. Blackman, M.A., Cheshunt College, Cambridge.

An article in the July number of The Expository Times[1] has drawn attention to parallels between the situation in Palestine in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. and the modern world situation. The writer's eyes had been opened to this parallelism by his experience as a missionary in China. He suggests that we have only to substitute Peking and Warsaw—and let us now add Paris—for Samaria and Jerusalem, Japan for Assyria, and Germany for Babylon, and the relevance of Old Testament prophecy for our crisis-ridden, war-stricken world at once becomes obvious.

A similar comparison is made by Procksch in the opening paragraph of his Commentary on Isaiah.[2] Here the Assyrian advance which terrified Isaiah's contemporaries is compared to the advances of Napoleon. Procksch was writing ten years ago, and since then history has produced a more compelling parallel in the conquering rushes of the army of Procksch's own nation. 'The boundaries between the small states had to fall in order to make room for the insatiable great power.' Thus Procksch describes the Assyrian advance; who to-day can fail to see the applicability of these words to events in Europe since September 1939?

Isaiah's mission was to a people mesmerized by great dangers among which they were set. Their leaders were moved to frantic action. Religion gave neither guidance nor steadying in the time of crisis. The prophet's task was to impart the serenity born of faith.

In chapter 7 of the Book of Isaiah we have a noteworthy contrast between the vacillating king and the serene prophet. Ahaz is busy with preparations for the improved water supply of Jerusalem. Isaiah is commanded to meet him at a place described as 'the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field' (*v.*[3])—a description tedious enough in our ears, but highly significant then. For this means measures that were being taken not for the health of the city only, but for its very life, in the event of siege, which was a growing probability. An enlightening comparison for us would be the Air Raid Precautions of our cities. Into the midst of this preoccupation of the king comes the prophet with his word from God. According to his divinely illumined reading of the situation these measures are unnecessary. The attackers are not so powerful as they seem, and only a panic-stricken mind will credit them with strength. Panic which magnifies the power of the enemy arises from lack of faith. 'If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established' (*v.*[9]). Here is a statement of Isaiah's fundamental conviction, and a true appreciation of him depends on the ability to expound this verse. How much of it was political common sense and how much religious insight, we ask, making use of a conventional distinction. Before we attempt an explanation let us look at the sequel and Isaiah's reaction to it. Ahaz could not rise to Isaiah's serene trust in God. Fear had riveted him to his present policy, and he even refused a miraculous vindication of the prophet's word lest it should force him to abandon that policy. Isaiah, therefore,

[1] 'The Prophetic Interpretation of History,' by the Rev. G. F. Allen.

[2] *Sellin's Kommentar zum Alten Testament*, ix. (1930).

pronounces woe on him and on Judah (*v.*[17]). We must take with this the further pronouncement of doom, ch. 8 *vv.*[5-8]. Here Isaiah compares his own advocacy of non-entanglement to a gently flowing stream; it is distasteful to the majority, however, who prefer a vigorous policy of support for the northern coalition of Israel and Syria against the common foe Assyria; very well, says Isaiah, the consequence of such a policy will be annihilation.

How, then, are we to understand and commend this attitude of Isaiah? His quarrel with these advocates of foreign adventure was that they did not allow their religious convictions to influence their policy; their action seemed to him to have no religious faith, no trust in God as its basis. No doubt they could have made a respectable argument for their position: the sort of argument we are familiar with for collective security and against a timid isolationism: neutrality is impossible in a world of imperialisms! And no doubt Isaiah might have argued on the same plane and maintained that there was a case for keeping out of the coalition: that it was sound political common sense for Judah to 'be quiet'; that geographically Judah was not, like Israel and Syria, within the sphere of interest of the great powers Assyria and Egypt; providentially Judah was a backwater and not the main stream, and recognizing this Judah should refuse to be enticed into the main stream, which would surely mean loss of independence. Isaiah might conceivably have supported his position by arguments such as these, political arguments that is; or he might even have admitted that on purely political grounds his opponents had some justification. But—and here is the vital consideration for an understanding of Isaiah—the strength of his case was that he was concerned not with politics but with religion. He was no advocate of political expediency; Machiavelli is his antithesis. His business was to challenge his people concerning the roots of their faith. Does their belief in God mean anything to them? Let them not work out their national destiny without considering that. 'The Lord of hosts, him shall ye sanctify.'

The abiding truth in Isaiah's assertion, however unpractical it may have sounded to the earnest nationalist of his day, is the insistence that consideration of the political advantages and disadvantages is not the whole of the matter. A nation which acknowledges God ought to realize this. A people which makes profession of religion ought not to be impatient when it is reminded that there is a will of God relative to every phase and every crisis of its national existence. The prophetic summons to submission to that divine will is not to be taken as in opposition to the counsels of politicians and military leaders, but rather as their presupposition.

Isaiah was right when he said that Judah's deepest need was of faith in its God. The king and those who favoured the invoking of Assyrian aid may have had a truer perception of the national danger than Isaiah had. If there existed then anything corresponding to a modern diplomatic or secret service, the information it submitted would have been at their disposal, but hardly at that of the prophet. In the case of Ahaz himself we need not assume that he was a rank coward, moved only by the fear of being deposed (7[6]). But the implicit logic of the arguments of these political leaders, as laid bare by Isaiah's serene insistence against them on the religious need, was that if only means could be found to avert the threat from Israel and Syria Judah's existence would be secure. Isaiah took the longer view. Gray's comment (*ICC*, *ad loc.*) is: 'Judah is not really threatened by the evil plans of its foes; it is not rendered safe because their plans are foiled.' Isaiah knew that the health of Judah depended on much more than that. It might be necessary to avert a danger by using political methods; but if Judah were to be 'established' something more creative than political machinations was needful. Ahaz's policy tended to rest satisfied as soon as the immediate external threat was removed; the prophet is commissioned to rouse the leaders from that inertia and to remind them of their deeper responsibilities.

Incidentally, Isaiah thought that the threat from Israel and Syria would soon pass anyhow, so that there was no need for Judah to take action. But this was not what Isaiah was mainly concerned to say. The chief burden of his message was not *vv.*[7-8] of ch. 7 ('within three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken in pieces, that it be not a people') but *v.*[9b] ('If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established'). The panicky action of Ahaz is condemned because it proceeds from lack of faith in God. The same tragic omission to turn to God is the occasion of the oracle preserved in 17[7-10]: 'Thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength.'

In Isaiah's judgment the action of the king merely confined matters to the political plane, and his own counsel was based on the fact that the life of a nation does not consist solely of diplomatic relationships and politics in the narrow sense, but

of all the relationships of a man with his fellow-man and especially of men's relationship to God. England is not the House of Commons, still less the Foreign Office. The true England is the people rising up in the time of danger to defend the weak, to resist oppression, prepared to subordinate all private and selfish interests for the sake of righteousness; and doing this not in panic or for their own self-preservation, but in the consciousness that this is God's will and with a humble resignation of the issue to Him.

Let us consider a later crisis, toward the end of Isaiah's activity as a prophet. Provoked by the intrigues of Judah, Sennacherib eventually, in 701, sent his army to lay siege to Jerusalem. Here again is an event which invites comparison with recent events in Europe and which whets our interest in examining the prophet's attitude. We to-day can hardly read the list of Assyria's past successes, which the Rabshakeh boastfully proclaimed in order to intimidate Hezekiah, without thinking of the countries which Germany prostrated before she faced England across the Channel and prepared her invasion. Sennacherib's own account of his advance may be quoted: 'Hezekiah of Judah, who had not submitted to my yoke, 46 of his strong cities . . . hewing about and trampling down, I besieged, I took. 200,150 people small and great, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep without number from the midst of them I brought out. . . . Himself as a bird in a cage in the midst of Jerusalem his royal city I shut up. . . .' (The Taylor Cylinder in the British Museum). The despair and panic of the population of Jerusalem, with the exception of Isaiah and his disciples, can be imagined. It was zero hour. There seemed no chance of averting utter calamity. Driver writes of this time: 'To the human eye the fate of the city must have appeared sealed. And it was a crisis upon which, as we who look back upon it in the light of history can see, something more turned than the future of a single nation. The issue was as momentous as any that have been determined by the "decisive battles of the world." It was a crisis as grave as when Persia threatened to intercept the rising civilization of Greece, or Vandal and Moor to destroy the Christianity of Europe'—to which we may add: or Nazism to supersede the Christian civilization of Europe.

But now, when the collapse of his country was inclining men to believe Isaiah's words and his warnings that had hitherto gone unheeded, Isaiah changes his tone. The end of the city has not come. Yahweh has, indeed, brought his people to despair, but he has not cast them off utterly. He is still their God, and is about to perform on their behalf a mighty work of deliverance—not a marvellous work to shame them (29^{14}), but a saving act done in 'zeal' (37^{32}), 'for mine own sake and for my servant David's sake' (37^{35}). The 'zeal' of which the prophet speaks means the passionate energy with which Yahweh champions the cause of his helpless people. This is characteristic of Yahweh, for his truest interpreters had always made him known as a 'jealous god.'

Isaiah's belief in the inviolability of Jerusalem with its Temple is hard to explain and commend to believing men to-day. In this matter it must be admitted that Isaiah was a man of his time. He inherited his people's veneration for the holy city, and their belief that it was pre-eminently the place of God's abode. This aspect of his attitude to Jerusalem clearly marks it as different in kind, not merely in degree, from, say, a modern Frenchman's attitude to Paris. There is no doubt a strong irrational element in the modern patriot's enthusiasm for the metropolis of his country, and this is sometimes referred to as a religious enthusiasm; but it cannot be compared for intensity of religious fervour with the enthusiasm of Isaiah and his contemporaries for Jerusalem.

In the case of Isaiah there was not only the hereditary veneration for the city, not only the fact that he was the 'child of his people's past.' There was also his transforming experience of God in the Temple which made traditional belief for him a personal possession and which determined all his subsequent thought and coloured his whole outlook (ch. 6). That experience, constantly reflected upon and probably renewed from time to time, must have been a fountain of assurance and genuine prophetic insight. Only on this assumption is it possible to criticise adequately the remarkable prophecies of the security of Jerusalem which Isaiah uttered toward the end of his life during the time when Assyrian armies were threatening.

Are we to be scornful and dismiss these oracles with a smile of incredulity? Do we agree with the more radical scholars and pronounce them 'prophecies after the event'? Was it simply a superb piece of bluff which, as it happened, and fortunately for Isaiah's reputation, was justified by the event? Shall we, with the more cautious commentator, withhold judgment and merely refer to a Greek historian's account of this disaster to the Assyrian army (Herodotus, ii. 141: mice gnawed the Assyrian bowstrings)? Or shall we affirm that

the explicitness of this prediction and the serenity of the prophet at the moment when the city was as it were under the executioner's axe cannot be regarded as fortuitous, but are only explicable as a genuinely supernatural broadening of vision? The critical attitude which places Isaiah in the category of the well-informed publicist of to-day will never do justice to Isaiah or any of the Hebrew prophets. There is no limit to the quickening of human mental powers which God may inspire in a man who is in communion with His mind and purpose.

Isaiah was a man sure of God; so firmly anchored upon God that he feared no storm in life. His mission was to a people tempted to venture out into the stormy seas of international politics, and his task was to bring them back to the harbour, and to be their lighthouse too. There seem to have been many in his day, as there have been many since, who thought that all of religion that mattered was what could be given expression in a political programme. Isaiah tried to make men see the fallacy of that. Political activity might be the appointed function of some within the State, but it could not be so for all; it could not be a satisfying interest for their souls; it was not the true end of man. Thus Isaiah constantly called men away from their obsession with this or that problem to the fundamental truths of religion—the reality of God, His righteousness, His providence. Isaiah said in effect: Forget that disturbing piece of news which has just come in about the movement of the Assyrian armies! Stop listening to the wireless! Quiet your soul a moment and listen to God. Recall yourself to your resources in Him. 'In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.' Behind all the ugliness there is beauty for the eye of faith to discern; below all the worry and tumult is calm and peace. Isaiah was sure of these things. Apparently he was not able to communicate this confidence to the men of his generation. But his words are recorded for the benefit of a later day, and his message is destined for every time of crisis when the wisest human leadership becomes flustered and the bravery of the citizen turns to despair. To us he being dead yet speaketh.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Praise Perfected.

By the Reverend Stuart Robertson, M.A., Lisbon.

'She hath done what she could.'—Mk 14^{8}.

Here in Portugal there are many who live a long way from our Scottish Church. It is not as easy for them to get to church as it is for you at home in England or Scotland; and if you go when you should—do you?—they go when they can, and that is not so often.

Now, I have a little friend hardly five years old, who lives a great way off, and who had only so far been once to church and that was when her baby sister was christened. So when her father told her he would take her to church next Sunday, she said, 'I hope the baby will be good,' for she thought that going to church always meant a christening, and was rather disappointed when she heard there would be no baby!

But he told her he was going to find out what hymns were to be sung so that she might learn them and be able to join in the singing. 'Oh,' she said, 'I'll sing "I'll show you how the farmer sows his wheat,"' an action-song she had learned at school. 'But,' her father said, 'I don't know that they would like that in the Scottish Church.' 'Very well, then,' she replied, 'I'll sing, "I love a lassie!"'

So the little lass came to church and stood up and sang with the rest. I could see her, and I tried to read her lips and find out what she was singing. It certainly was not the words of the hymn, but I have never yet found out what she sang. Like the song the Sirens sang to Ulysses it remains an untold secret. I firmly believe it was 'I love a lassie,' which is not in any hymn-book, ancient or modern; and I am certain that that song never got among the hymns at Morning Service before or since.

But suppose she did sing 'I love a lassie,' what are you going to say about it? Was she wrong? Was it irreverent? If you or I had done it, it

would have been both wrong and irreverent, because you and I can read, and we know better. She couldn't and she didn't.

Let me tell you what I think. I think her song went up to the throne of God as fair and beautiful a thing as the grandest anthem ever sung in any great cathedral. And I have two reasons for so thinking.

One is what happened when Jesus came to Jerusalem. The children in the Temple shouted 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' That was no part of the Temple service, and the priests were 'sore displeased,' and said to Jesus, 'Do you hear what they say?' Jesus said, 'Yes I do; have you never read, "Thou hast brought praise to perfection from the mouths of babes and sucklings"?' That means that children's praises may be stammering and stumbling but because they are simple and sincere they are made perfect by God, and rank with the finest praises men can offer; and so even 'I love a lassie,' which on the lips of any one else is only a comic song, from the pure and innocent lips of my little friend came to God perfected—a perfect offering which He accepted and blessed.

My second reason is that once a poor woman poured her offering over Jesus' feet. Some onlookers found fault with her. Jesus said, 'Let her alone; *she hath done what she could.*' That was enough. God doesn't ask us to do what we can't; but He does expect us to do what we can. He doesn't expect from a child what He expects from a grown-up person: that wouldn't be fair. A child's birthday gift to her mother may be badly shaped and clumsily sewn but the mother sees it through the eyes of love and sees it perfect. So, I am certain, does God.

Do you know the old legend of the juggler and acrobat who became a monk? He loved Jesus and was unhappy because he had no worthy gift to offer Him. The others could all do something worth while for Jesus' sake. One copied the Gospels beautifully; another illuminated manuscripts in lovely colours; another carved figures for the church. He could do none of these things and it made him sad. But after a while the sad look went off his face and the others wondered why. They noticed that every day he spent a long time in the church between the services, and, again, they wondered why. One day they hid and watched, and they were shocked and horrified to see him doing all his circus tricks before the figure of Jesus: juggling with knives, throwing somersaults, walking on his hands, till the sweat glistened on his brow. The monks were about to rush on him to seize him and have him punished for what seemed to them wicked profanity, when the figure of Jesus stooped down and wiped the sweat from his brow with hands that blessed. That is only a legend but it tells the same truth: he had done what he could, and it had been accepted.

Now I don't ask you what sort of praises, what fashion of worship, what kind of service you offer; but I want you to ask yourself whether it is the best you can bring. Christ's praise halts, and Christ's kingdom is slow in coming because so many people think that, since they can't do some big thing they would like to do, it isn't worth while to do the little things they can do. Because they can't sing perfectly they don't sing at all. Because they can't give a lot they don't give their little.

You can always do what you can. Your best is enough, even if it be singing 'I love a lassie' to God's praise. It will find God's blessing.

No Neutrality.

By the Reverend Charles M. Hepburn, B.D., Crieff.

'And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions?'—1 K 18^{21}.

A short time ago three small maidens of my acquaintance were conversing. It appears that the subject of their conversation was the very important question of marriage. No. 1 and No. 2 were quite decided that when they grew up they would get married: but after a moment No. 3, the littlest one, who has a mind of her own, remarked, 'Oh well, you two may do what you like, but when I grow up I'm going to remain neutral.'

I'm not sure she altogether understood what neutral meant. A neuter noun, for instance, is a noun which is neither masculine nor feminine. A neutral person in the same way is a person who is neither on one side or the other. In the Bible itself we are told of some such who wouldn't make up their minds about being on one side or the other. Once, for example, the prophet Elijah said to the people, 'How long halt ye between two opinions?' that is, when are you going to make up your minds whether you will serve the Lord God or not? And, again, the Bible tells us of Christians who were neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm only, and it didn't like them any more than you would like a lukewarm hot-water bottle in your bed on a wintry night.

And in these times in the world's struggle there

are neutral nations of that sort, although some might have been happier now by taking sides. This was what a great American wrote :

Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.

And when such a moment does come there is only one side that any brave nation can be on. Any time when it is a matter of right versus wrong none of us must remain neutral, acting the part of the looker-on, trying to sit as long as possible 'on the fence' and wondering on which side we'll fall. I came across a couple of verses, I can't say who wrote them because they're by some one called 'Anonymous,' and they warn us against that attitude.

Honey, see dat jaybird dah
Sittin' on de fence ?
Firs' he look dis way, den dat,
Lak he ain't got sense.
Flap his wings an' crane his neck
Ain' no use to try
Figu'in' from the way he ac's
Where he's gwine to fly.

Sittin' on de fence, mah boy,
Wond'rin' what to do
Ain' gwine bring no bacon home,
No suh, not fo' you.
Know yo' min' an' go ahead ;
Do de bes' you can !
Dat's de way you proves yo'self,
An' shows yo'self a man.

And, of course, for you boys and girls, and for us grown-ups too, the biggest decision of all is just this, have you decided for Jesus Christ, are you on His side, and will you always honour Him ? In such a matter are any of us only neutral ? One of Captain Scott's men at the South Pole was a brave Scotsman called Birdie Bowers. One night when the outlook was very black he said that Christ seemed to come to him and showed him why we are here in this world, that it is to make a great decision, a decision between what is truly great and what is only small, between what is worldly and what is spiritual. After which Birdie Bowers wrote this, 'Who could refuse to stick up for such a Friend ?' Who could, indeed ! Not you, I am sure. No, you will stand up for Him, you will be firmly on His side, and you'll never be neutral as long as you live.

The Christian Year.

Twenty-sixth Sunday after Trinity.

Habakkuk and To-day.

By the Reverend J. Ireland Hasler, B.A., Orpington.

'I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me.'—Hab 2^1.

We know nothing about the personal history of this prophet, nor can we be certain as to the exact times in which he lived. This much, however, we know—that he was the pioneer of a new order of prophecy. His predecessors had been spokesmen to man for God : he was a spokesman to God for man. They had dealt chiefly with the sins of life, and he dealt rather with the problems of life. He has left on record his main problem, namely, 'Why doth the way of the wicked prosper ?' Current events have brought us face to face again with that problem, and it may therefore be helpful to note what Habakkuk did and also what he learned.

I. What Habakkuk Did.

(i) *He got up higher.*—He detached himself from the influence of his immediate environment. He sought a more extended range of vision that he might have a truer perspective. He aimed to view events not in the beclouded atmosphere of the present but from the standpoint of eternal truth. A traveller by air has recorded his experience : 'At the height of 10,000 feet much that oppresses the mind assumes its true proportion.' What that traveller experienced in the realm of the physical, Habakkuk sought to experience in the realm of Spirit.

How ? A psalmist has told us that when he was in like perplexity he went into the sanctuary of God, and in God's light he saw light. It was in the Temple, too, that Isaiah had his vision. Habakkuk sought to understand the happenings around him from the vantage ground of revealed truth. That was one way—and the primary way—but there was also another. The marginal reading of the latter clause in the text suggests it, namely : 'What he will say *in* me.' We can reach the heights through the depths—the depths of the soul. There was the way of inner illumination as well as that of external revelation—the way of the Spirit and the way of the Word. Habakkuk sought that God would so cleanse and enlighten his mind that he might see the hidden harmony that underlay the world's discords.

(ii) *He waited.*—He was like the operator in a wireless station on some lonely promontory who sends a message vibrating across the night and sea, and then waits for the distant response. So Habakkuk waited. All the faith he had amid the murky darkness was that there was light ahead, and he exercised patience until he could discern its first faint glimmer. So he represents the patience of faith waiting upon God amid universal confusion. If we are to see the happenings of to-day in their right perspective, we must imitate him. We must seek to view them in their relation to God and revealed truth. Standing on the watch tower of Biblical revelation there are certain facts we descry which have their bearing on the present situation.

(*a*) God is the God of all—even of enemy nations. He may choose a nation, but if so, it is for service and not for enjoying a monopoly of privilege. He has the welfare of Germany to consider as well as that of Britain. In the light of this truth which would be better—a speedy ending of the conflict or a revival of religion in Europe after a protracted struggle?

(*b*) God's chief concern is with righteousness, not with material prosperity. The ancient prophets saw a connexion between God and those experiences of life which we regard as evils, for example, disaster, loss, suffering. Scripture gives us a twofold interpretation of such, namely, that they are a means of discipline or a means of service. Are not both interpretations applicable to what Britain is now undergoing? A sudden shock has at times brought benefit to a sufferer from some physical or mental affliction. The world at large needed a shock like the present upheaval, if man was not utterly to lose his soul. Further, no victory over evil is attained without suffering. Both individuals and communities have been called to suffer vicariously for the welfare of others or for the maintenance of right, and to such a service we are called to-day.

(*c*) The Bible speaks of great crises in history which it terms 'The day of the Lord,' or 'The day of the Son of man'—times when amid human activities God seems specially at work to smite, sift, and save, times of storm that sweep away that which is effete and obsolete. Surely the present time is such. Mr. J. B. Priestley sees in it the breaking down of an old system and the building up of a new and better one. Hence, besides awaiting terrible things from Hitler, 'we ought to be expecting great things from God.' Truths like these surely put us on the right lines for the discernment of the vision, but for its full comprehension we have yet to wait.

II. What Habakkuk Learned.

It is stated in *v.*[4]—'The soul of the wicked shall faint within him, but the good man lasts and lives as he is faithful' (Moffatt). That was not what he had *desired* to know: there is no answer there to his question. But that was what he *needed* to know for the endurance of his present trial. It was not the full vision, but it was light enough for the immediate need. Heaven, not earth, is the place of perfect vision. The two things which he learned were: that the *evil man has no staying power.* 'Pride and violence dig their own grave—

> Power, Conquest, Terror, War—
> These are not ultimate things,
> And these decay;

and that *the staying power of the good man is dependent on faithfulness.* 'Faithfulness' is a truer rendering than 'Faith.' It is the result of faith rather than faith itself which the prophet has in mind. The word means primarily steadiness in a physical sense, like the stability of a house founded upon a rock. Then it comes to mean moral steadfastness, promise-keeping, trustworthiness, consistency of character. It may be defined as adherence to those principles and ways of life which possess permanence because they are in accord with the nature of the Eternal God. It is this inner strength that the wicked lack. They may be strong in munitions but they are weak in morale, and it is the latter which counts in the long run. The destiny of a man or nation is determined by character, and it is this, too, which gives staying power. It is such power that we as a nation are specially needing. In all probability our fidelity to the principles of freedom and right will be strained to the uttermost. The enemy will seek—as he has already sought—to induce us for our own comfort to compromise. But to abandon our goal because of what we have to endure would spell defeat and be a set-back to the welfare of the world.

In the closing words of this book the writer contemplates the possible disappearance of those things which are ordinarily regarded as essentials. He faces poverty and privation, barren fields and empty barns, but yet is able to rejoice in the God who saves him from going under. There you have the steadfastness of faithfulness at its highest. The good man has often had to die for his faithfulness, but such death is not defeat: it is the triumph of the spirit's life and it helps on the victory of goodness in this world. We are at our best when we find something for which we are willing to give up

life itself. Such was the spirit manifested by Jesus in Gethsemane. He was prepared to endure all that the contradiction of sinners against Him could inflict, even bodily death, because He saw that beyond it all lay the triumph of good and the victory of God. Such, too, was the patience of the saints recorded in the Apocalypse. Sustained by the conviction that at long last right would prevail and God assert His supremacy they persisted in their allegiance even unto death. They lost their lives but they won their souls, and they helped to keep the cause of truth and right alive in the world and to extend their Redeemer's Kingdom.

Take thou no thought for aught save truth and right,
Content, if such thy fate, to die obscure;
. . . . . .
Keep innocence: be all a true man ought,
Let neither pleasure tempt, nor pain appal;
Who hath this, he hath all things, having nought;
Who hath it not hath nothing, having all.

SUNDAY NEXT BEFORE ADVENT.

The Lord our Righteousness.

'This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness.'—Jer 23^6.

The history of man has been described in very different ways. To some it is a mere history of selfishness; the aim of all men, so they tell us, is really to get what they can. Others have been able to see that life is not so ignoble a thing as this; but all the same, so it appears to them, the bad succeeds in this world quite as often as the good, and life is nothing but blind groping after we know not what. Others, again, can see that, whilst selfishness and moral evil often 'pay' at the time, they never pay in the long-run, and so, they conclude, the history of man is the history of a gradual ascent by the elimination of the evil-doer and the survival of the fittest.

No doubt this last is much nearer the truth than the others, but does it really satisfy us? Certainly it did not satisfy our Lord. He was not willing to rest content with the salvation of those who were conquerors in life's battle—with the healing of those who had nothing particular the matter with them. He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance: He came to seek and to save that which was lost. Let us at least be clear about this, then, that if we think only of those who have been successful, and are satisfied to look for progress merely in the survival of the best elements of society, we are not His disciples: we shall have to find some other Master instead of our Lord, for we are false to the very first principles of His gospel.

But what I am going to set before you is another account of the history of man's life. It is the history of his search after holiness; the record of his hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Does it seem that this is too lofty a claim to make on behalf of this life? I know well that we are apt to concern ourselves a great deal more about some social success than we do about growth in grace, and that the details of getting on in the world occupy our minds a good deal more than the desire to be like God. But that does not alter the fact that God is at work, and He is stronger than we are. It is He who has put the desire for righteousness in our hearts and with all our carelessness we cannot drive it out. We cannot help reverencing all that is good when once we see it. Sorrow may leave its mark upon us, or disillusionment may sour us, but there will remain one thing of which we are perfectly sure: that, come what may, right is right and wrong is wrong, and nothing can turn the one into the other. We may be in just as much doubt as ever we were whether this or that is the right thing to do in this or that particular case, but we shall be quite sure that there is a right thing and a wrong thing, if only we had eyes to see.

And not only is it the case that men have always tried to follow after righteousness, but little by little God has been teaching them more about righteousness. To the savage, it meant something altogether different from that which it means to civilized men; to the child, it means something quite different from what grown-up people mean by it; to the saint, it means far more than it does to the ordinary Christian. Let us think of this for a little.

To the savage, righteousness was something purely external and ceremonial. In order to come near to their god they must be clean, but this cleanness consisted merely in an outward preparation of the body, in washing and anointing, in abstaining from food, or from certain outward acts. Anger or lust or cruelty did not incapacitate a man for worship; for righteousness was only thought of as having to do with such outward things as these. That, then, was the earliest idea of righteousness; and, after all, they who held it had some little gleam of truth in them. After all, outward cleansing *is* one of the elements of righteousness.

And so we come to the second stage in man's search after righteousness. Man has come to see that righteousness consists, not in that which is merely

formal, but in that which touches all his actions; to be righteous, he must keep God's commandments. It is plain that this is a deeper conception altogether, and one which we can never outgrow. We may be as far advanced as we please, but the plain, far-reaching precepts of the Law still have their full meaning for us; and as we grow so do they. For a boy, 'Thou shalt not steal' is a very simple matter; but as we get older, and our concerns get to be involved with those of other people, and we learn more of the ways in which everything that we do either makes life harder or easier for them, we begin to find that it is not so simple a matter as we thought, and that the commandment is just as necessary for us as ever it was. We cannot outgrow the Commandments.

And yet, a very little thought will show us that the idea of righteousness is not fulfilled in the keeping of commandments. Directly you try to reduce duty to a code of rules you will find that you must leave something out. Above all, the more you set your mind upon the mere keeping of commandments, the more mechanical you become, and the more unreal your righteousness becomes. In St. Paul's words, ordinances, such as touch not, taste not, handle not, 'perish in the using.'

And thus God has led on His people to see, in the third place, that righteousness cannot mean anything, however good, that is wholly external to us; it must be within us as well as without. In other words, men have come to see that righteousness must mean obedience, not to an external but to an internal law. Obedience to a commandment is of no force at all and no value at all unless my will takes part in it; and in the last resort the commandment is binding on me because it commends itself to my own conscience. Here there is a great step forward. It is quite true that righteousness is a *personal* thing; something that concerns me individually. It is quite true that we are bound to follow the dictates of our own conscience. It is our birthright as Christians to do so. And yet, can we find any final basis for righteousness here? Can righteousness consist in doing what is right in our own eyes? We feel at once that that will never do; and all human experience shows that we are right. You must follow the guidance of your conscience, but your conscience will be but a false guide unless it has something better than itself to rest upon. St. Paul tells us that he was following his conscience when he persecuted the Church, and yet afterwards he came to see that he was not worthy to be called an apostle, because he persecuted the Church of Christ.

A righteousness which begins and ends with *me*, and my efforts to make myself good, and to do so by living up to my own standard, can never really satisfy my best aspirations. The stream cannot rise above its own source; with all my trying I cannot rise above my own standard for myself, and that standard is marred by my sins, is limited by the fact that after all it is only part of *me*. It is just that that I want to get away from. In my best moments (and they, after all, are the moments that we must try to live by)—in my best moments I long, not only to be free from the limitations of my own lower nature and the web of bad habits that I have woven about myself, but to be lifted to a higher level altogether. I hunger and thirst after a righteousness which shall *not* be my own: I long to be righteous 'even as He is righteous.'

This is the name whereby He shall be called: The Lord our Righteousness. Now we know what righteousness is. Not the cleansing of the outer man only, but the purifying of the inner man, the consecration of the whole being in the service of God, the preserving of the entire man, body and soul and spirit, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Righteousness is being like Him, its inspiration is looking to Him, its motive power is prayer for His Spirit. Shall we not pray more frequently and more earnestly that we may be made like Him? This gives the joy of comradeship to the stern and lonely path of duty. It gives to the life of righteousness that personal character which, as we know in our everyday experience, transfigures all life.[1]

First Sunday in Advent.

Thy Searching Sight.

'And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world.'—Jn 9^{39}.

A popular book of last century had the title *Is it Possible to Make the Best of Both Worlds?* The book is perhaps forgotten, but the author, Thomas Binney, has an assured place in Christian literature if only for one of his hymns:

> Eternal Light! eternal Light!
> How pure the soul must be,
> When, placed within Thy searching sight,
> It shrinks not, but, with calm delight,
> Can live, and look on Thee!

[1] W. Collins, *Hours of Insight*, 141.

Among its lines are some of the most solemnizing in all our hymnaries—

> O how shall I, whose native sphere
> Is dark, whose mind is dim,
> Before the Ineffable appear,
> And on my naked spirit bear
> The uncreated beam?

They speak of judgment to come.

A writer has told recently of a strange thing to be observed in the tropical jungle. The growth is so dense that, even at midday, everything is dark and no sunshine can penetrate. But from time to time it happens that one ray of sunlight pierces through the rank foliage and strikes the ground. Then, with the slow-moving sun, it travels along, a slender, vivid searchlight, creeping forward inevitably. It is like the concentrated ray of a burning-glass. Tiny insects can be seen hurrying away from its terrifying approach. Wherever it strikes, it scorches and burns. The author of the hymn might have had some such picture in his mind when he wrote of the uncreated beam of God's holiness.

'Judgment' is not a popular word in our day. We do not think of the spiritual world as being near. Many are so busy with the affairs of this world that they find no time to think of the other. Heaven and hell, it has been said, are passing to the memories of a far-off childhood—the one ceasing to attract, the other to alarm. The thought of eternal punishment has almost vanished from our minds.

For this last development there are certain reasons which are not unworthy. Our own human ideas on punishment have undergone a change for the better. Punishment is no longer regarded by civilized people as merely vindictive. The anger of a mob may break out in violence and lynch-law, but we regard this as the return to a brutal stage of life, not as an expression of justice. Punishment is not thought of as revenge. It is reformatory: it aims at restoring the criminal to his better self. And we feel that the justice of God cannot be inferior in this respect to the best that man has been enabled to evolve. It may be that a human soul, of its own stubborn choice, goes out in darkness, but if God is still punishing, it will be a sign that there is hope of redeeming.

We have also the conviction that the happiness of heaven can never be complete so long as any souls remain outside. No human being, himself redeemed, could be happy so long as one loved by him was still without. How much more must the blessedness of God be disturbed so long as any of His children remains in the outer darkness.

And some have felt that the idea of heaven and hell takes away from the disinterestedness of living a good life. They do not wish to serve God for the sake of reward. That is the gibe which the adversary threw at Job—Doth Job fear God for nought? Take away his rewards and see how he will change! These are worthy reasons for reconsidering our forefathers' stern doctrines about the future.

But there are others not at all worthy. There is not enough *seriousness*. Because the other world seems far off we ignore it. When Napoleon was threatened with disaster, he used to reckon up his reserves and count among them regiments which he well knew were no longer in existence, except in cadre. When his staff remonstrated with him, he would turn sharply and exclaim, 'Would you rob me of my peace of mind?' We put off thinking of the realities which are beyond, because that would rob us of our false tranquillity. There is not enough *fear*. Because we are lenient with ourselves, we begin half to imagine that God will be lenient with us. He cannot be. Nothing that is evil can come into His presence. And there is not enough *love*. If we had more love we should see the seriousness of wrong-doing, for it once brought Jesus, and every day it brings Him afresh, to the Cross for us. If we had more love for God we should see the consequence of our sins in eternal separation from Him. And if once we apprehend that consequence, however dimly, we know that no additional punishment is required.

We can leave the question of punishment in His hands and give our attention to the thought of judgment. And of this two things must be said.

1. It is, quite clearly, *a present reality*. When a nation abandons itself to vice, we see its condemnation in its moral decline. The vices of a people are its own judgment. As a nation we are conscious of being deeply polluted by sins of the flesh, by intemperance and impurity. We are grimly aware of the canker of gambling eating out the soul of the nation. And hope lies alone in our finding the way back to God. Only as we do that can we regain our moral leadership in the world.

2. But judgment is also *a future certainty*. We cannot give a moment's serious thought to it without realizing that. Right is for ever right and wrong for ever wrong. Nothing can stay the final separation of the two. Though the hour is hidden, yet for the world and for every man the hour is fixed. This final judgment has been compared by

F. W. Robertson to the firing of a mine. The match has been applied to the fuse, and there is a moment of deep suspense. Men stand at a distance and hold their breath. Nothing is seen but a thin column of white smoke, which rises slowly upwards and then is puffed away by the wind. It disappears, and men breathe again. The inexperienced soldier would go forward, imagining that the thing has been a failure. Then, just when expectation has begun to ebb away, there comes a low, deep thunder, and a column of earth is thrown upwards and all that was on it comes crashing down again, shattered with the explosion. According to God's Word, the train is set. The first moment of suspense is past. The Christians of the Early Church looked for this event to take place within their own lifetime. Now men profess to think that the danger is over. There is a kind of false security which, for many people, is shattered only by the approach of death. It would be well if we could give more time to picturing the inevitable approach of that travelling ray of light, piercing the darkness, testing all that it touches, scorching and destroying all that is evil and unworthy.

> How pure the soul must be,
> When, placed within Thy searching sight,
> It shrinks not, but, with calm delight,
> Can live, and look on Thee!

How shall we escape? Not by anything we have done. Many have tried that way and have come only to the state of Martin Luther in the monastery, with the exceeding bitter cry, 'My sin, my sin, my sin!' But only by the mercy of God, and this—all praise be to Him—He has shown beyond all possibility of doubt. It is Jesus who is to be our Judge. The throne of God is a throne which is shared. It is shared by the Sufferer—the throne of God *and of the Lamb*. The judgment of men is committed to One who lived among men and died for men's sins. God has revealed His holiness gradually, as man was enabled to bear it. Fear is taken away because simultaneously God reveals His love. God's holiness, revealed in Jesus, would be intolerable to men, and we should be left with only the disastrous feeling of not worth while, were it not for the love which went with it, even to the Cross. The glory of God's presence is not strange or altogether overwhelming to those who have known *Him*. The universe is homeward-bound. Man, with all his sorrows and his trivialities and his sins, is travelling home to the house of the Father and the glory of the Lord.

'For judgment I am come into this world.' If Jesus had said these solemn words and then vanished from the earth, our position would have been without hope. But He stayed to take the terror from them. He was more than Judge.

It once happened that Crossley, the Lancashire manufacturer and philanthropist, was on the bench as a magistrate when a girl of the Salvation Army was being tried. (The sister was accused of obstructing the traffic. Rendel Harris remarks that it was a particular 'broad way' that she was trying to obstruct, not within the jurisdiction of the court.) When it came to this case, Crossley left the Bench and took his stand in the dock beside the girl until her trial was finished. It was a sensational action. From the stolid, respectable Bench there stepped forward that noble and gracious figure and took his stand with her as alone she faced this public ignominy and humiliation. No doubt, she was worthy of it. And, though we are most unworthy, this is a picture of that which Jesus the Judge has promised to do. For judgment He is come into the world, and the world knows that it cannot bear that scrutiny. But our Judge becomes our Advocate.[1]

Second Sunday in Advent.

The Day of Everyman's Decision.

By the Reverend E. Macmillan, D.D., Pretoria, South Africa.

'Multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.'—Joel 3^{14}.

There is a sense of judgment in this book. It is inspired by an actual calamity which befell the land and nation. A plague of locusts had laid waste the whole country. There had never been the like before. It was a stupendous calamity, and not only the prophet saw that it had some connexion with national sin. In this chapter we read of the terrible social and moral conditions, and the prophet rightly uses this time of calamity as an opportunity for the people to return to God. No use preaching judgment to people who have sinned. It only shuts them up to their sin and shuts them out from God and the hope of return. They already have a sense of judgment, and all they want to know at such a time is whether there is any hope of God being gracious, and whether there is hope of repentance and return. And, with all its terrible pictures of the Day of the Lord, this little book has one of the most wonderful pictures of God's forgiving grace and reviving mercy.

When the Bible uses that phrase 'day of the

[1] E. P. Dickie, in *The Professor as Preacher*, 67.

Lord' it is not necessarily a day of judgment that is meant. It just means a day when God will make Himself known in mercy or in judgment. We must not think of God's judgment as punishment. This is not the motive of it or even the essential element in it. It would be truer to say that the heart of His judgment is always mercy. It is in order to arrest men in their headlong flight from Him, and from truth, purity, and sanity, that He sends judgment to recall them to Him. 'When thy judgments are in the earth, then the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness.'

When we speak of the Day of the Lord we usually think of the Day of Judgment, when all the nations shall be gathered together and judged for their deeds, good or bad. But we must not limit judgment to the last day, or postpone indefinitely the time when God will take action; for He is always taking action and always with a view to mercy, judging people for their sins in order to save them from themselves and from the consequences of their own actions. Ruskin is close to New Testament teaching when he says: 'Every day is a day of judgment. Think you that judgment waits till the doors of the grave are opened. It waits at the corners of our streets. We are in the midst of judgment. The insects we crush are our judges; the moments we fret away are our judges. The elements that feed us judge us as they minister, and the pleasures that deceive us judge us as we indulge.' It is true. We need not wait for a day of judgment beyond the grave. That day of reckoning has come. The nations of the world are gathered before God's judgment seat. There is no neutrality possible in an issue that concerns humanity. If this time of world travail means anything for God or for men, it is that all the nations are being summoned to answer for their stewardship, whether good or bad, and to declare where they stand, whether *for God* or *against Him*.

Some nations may feel it to be in their interest to be on this side or on that. The time is past for considering questions of self-interest. It is now a question of considering the interests of the Truth and Justice that are at the heart of things, and committing ourselves to God who alone is Truth, and has Justice in His Hand. So it means first of all getting right with God. This is the only way of being sure that we are on God's side, on the side of Truth. God is calling nations and men to His side. He that is not with Him is against Him. So it is ultimately a question of 'Who is on the Lord's side?' and this is the first question we have to answer. This is a Day of the Lord because it is the day of Everyman's decision. It is not a question of what we *think* about the war, it is a question of what we are prepared to do about it. It is a terrible responsibility. It is not a matter to which we or any living human being can be indifferent. It is no longer even a matter which concerns this or that group of nations. It affects and concerns every nation. God wants to know what every nation is going to do in an issue that concerns humanity. His interest is not in this or that particular nation, for there is no partiality with God. His interest is in humanity, and He wants it to be set free from the ills, injustices, and wrongs that are afflicting it.

It is for each of us to decide what we can do to stand for truth, sanity, mercy, and loving-kindness in a world that has gone mad. God is calling us, for these are the things that are dear to His heart. They are being challenged to-day. We must see to it that they do not perish from the earth. And first we must see that they are being kept alive in our own hearts. We must be morally re-armed, for this is no ordinary conflict. It is a fight for *moral* supremacy. There is something for each of us in this struggle above and beyond our natural or national tests—a loyalty to something higher than even love of country. This helps us to give ourselves for its saving in a deeper way than ever we have done. It is a committal of ourselves to God, a loyalty to Jesus Christ, which inspires us with a passion and devotion to His cause that stops at nothing in the way of suffering or sacrifice to see Him and His cause victorious. This is the passion of love and loyalty that we need in these days, for it will serve us for any kind of trial or suffering we may be called upon to endure. And we do not know what there is of that in store for us. We are asked to be ready for anything, and whatever happens to be found on God's side.

This is the message we would get across to the youth of our land—that they be girded for the fight; for it is a fight not only with physical forces of flesh and blood, but with spiritual principalities and powers of darkness. And they need more than physical training and material armour. Christ has the first claim on our loyalty and love, and when we have met His claim, all other claims will be honourably met, and we will go into the fight with a sensation of safety in our spirit, and the assurance that we are invincible. Some day the youth of the world will take the question of world peace into their own hands. But in the meantime there is a decision which is still left to them and which they alone can make, and it has to do with their whole

attitude towards life, towards God. A man has only one life to give, and God wants the first claim on it before it is wholly mortgaged by the world, the flesh, and the devil, or even by so high a claim as that of one's country.

This is a day of judgment, for nations and for men. How God is judging our own nation, leaders and people! How they and we are being measured, tested, weighed in the balances, with His own weights of truth and equity, and how often the balance goes up with a run! Some one once said to Pitt: 'Ah! what you fear for Britain is a day of judgment.' 'No,' he answered. 'What I fear for Britain is *no* day of judgment.'

Yes, that is what we fear for our Empire. What was happening these past years? Moral rearmament? No, she was slipping back in moral quality and discipline. And what has been happening to South Africa? She has been suffering at the hands of disintegrating forces, moral rot, and race division; and to-day finds her unready and divided in her day of judgment, living and behaving as if there were no cause for discipline, spending wastefully on pleasure what she ought to be saving.

This Day of the Lord may be the saving of Britain, of South Africa, and of many another country, yet so as by fire. For it is only through God's fiery judgment that any of us is saved.

It was with such a situation that the prophet was faced, a condition of utter waste and destruction. There was nothing left that could be reclaimed, nothing except the land itself; but that is surely something. We know that land has marvellous powers of recuperation when allowed and helped to recover. Man can work a miracle with land, even when it is a wilderness; and God can work a miracle with a life that has been wasted and destroyed. He can say of the wasted land, 'Fear not, O land, rejoice and be glad, for the Lord will do great things.' He can say of the wasted life, 'Turn unto the Lord your God, for the Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness. Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.' 'The Lord is near in the valley of decision.'

Contributions and Comments.

Note on the Word ὡσαννά.

The occurrences of the word in the New Testament are as follows: Mk $11^{9.10}$=Mt 21^{9}. (The parallel passage in Lk 19^{38} omits ὡσαννά, as the significance of the word would be missed by Gentile readers.) The word also occurs in Mt 21^{15} and in the similar passage in Jn 12^{13}.

Much has been written on this word. That it is borrowed from Ps $118^{25.26}$ (הוֹשִׁיעָה נָּא, LXX σῶσον δή) is indubitable. But whether enough has been said as to the meaning of the cry as recorded in the Gospels is open to doubt. Is it enough to say, as does A. Plummer (*An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 286):

> 'It would seem as if what had originally been a prayer had come, through its frequent use in shouts at the Feast of Tabernacles, to be regarded as an exclamation of greeting or congratulation, similar to "Hail!" The original meaning could be made to hold in such an expression as "Hosanna to the Son of David"; but it is difficult to make that meaning good in "Hosanna in the Highest." The probability is that the original meaning is lost in both phrases, and that we are to understand some such thought as "Glory to the Son of David," "Glory in the highest," the latter expression meaning that those who are in heaven join in this cry'?

W. C. Allen (*St. Matthew, International Critical Commentary*, 221), J. H. Thayer (*Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, ii. 418 to 419), A. H. McNeile (*The Gospel according to St. Matthew*, 296), and others support this 'ejaculatory' interpretation of 'Hosanna.'[1]

The purpose of this note is to ask this question—'Why was this word used if the only meaning attached to it was that of "Hail" or "Welcome"?' and to suggest that there is to be found in the use of this word, *at this particular moment in the Ministry of Jesus*, a deeper significance than is usually given it.

That significance is, I would suggest, to be found in the use of the root ישע (Hiphil הוֹשִׁיעַ 'to save') and its connection with the name Jesus (יְהוֹשֻׁעַ or יֵשׁוּעַ). This was a cry on the part of the people, led doubtless by some enthusiast and rapidly taken up by the crowd, to this effect: 'Here is the golden

[1] That it was later used liturgically is clear from Did. X, where, in the post-Communion thanksgiving, it occurs in the form ὡσαννὰ τῷ θεῷ Δαυείδ.

opportunity of the years during which you have exercised your ministry among us. Do now that which your name implies—that for which we have been so long waiting, namely, be a modern Joshua and bring about a national deliverance and *save* us from our enemies.'

We have here in fact another instance of the misunderstanding of the Messianic rule—instances of which so frequently occur in the Gospels. Resolutely Jesus had Himself refused the current conception of Messiahship (as shown, for example, in the *Magnificat*), at the Temptation (Mt 4^{1-11}, Lk 4^{1-13}) and at other times, and had pressed down on the minds and consciences of His hearers that conception of the Suffering Servant, the combination of which with current ideas was His greatest contribution to the doctrine of the Messiah. This it was which had 'scandalized' the Baptist (with Lk $3^{16.\ 17}$ cf. 7^{18-23}),[1] and which probably so disappointed Judas as to lead to his final betrayal of his Master.

Now, in the passages under discussion, the ministry is well advanced. Still Jesus delays to effect this national deliverance from Roman supremacy for which the people long. Here is the fulfilment of the prophetic word—'Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.' 'Save, we pray thee' goes up the cry. 'Jesus, live up to the honoured name "Joshua" and be at once deliverer and King.' But now, as always, the emphasis of Jesus is not on the part of the quotation which refers to kingship, but on that which refers to humility—'meek.'

If the above interpretation is a true one, we can understand the quick psychological change in the minds of the people. Disappointment, disillusionment, a sense of being let down ensued; and shortly afterwards the cry went up 'Crucify him.'

One further difficulty remains. The addition in Mt 21^{9} of the words τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ has occasioned difficulty to commentators. H. B. Swete, for example, suggests (*The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 251) that 'it may have been introduced' as a liturgical formula 'into the evangelical tradition; it is worthy of note that Mark and John agree to omit τῷ υἱῷ Δαυίδ here.' This may be correct. The passage is easier without the words. If, however, they represent the original cry of the crowd, might they not be taken as an exclamation—a summons of allegiance to Him who was to be their deliverer? Thus: 'Save (us), we pray! (Hither) to the Son of David!' As to the phrase ἐν τοῖς ὑψίστοις it may be taken as meaning 'let the prayer for deliverance which we are now addressing to Jesus be ratified in high heaven.'

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[1] On this see further R. Newton Flew, *Jesus and His Church*, 91 ff.

Entre Nous.

Grenfell of Labrador—1865–1940.

'Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?' No, not fallen! Rather we shall say that a bold adventurer has set out on his last and greatest voyage, and we would wave him a grateful and honourable farewell.

Life was to him from first to last an adventure. The call of the unknown thrilled through his blood and the lure of the hazardous was irresistible. He was of an absolutely fearless and buoyant spirit, as full of fun as of courage and endurance. Reckless of danger he would navigate some crazy craft through the fogs and reefs and icebergs of Labrador; he took long and perilous journeys across trackless snowy plains; he leaped overboard into the chilly North Atlantic to retrieve a lost cricket ball. As long as British boys love true tales of travel and adventure, valour and virtue, his story will be read, and as long as the Christian Church honours the names of her great pioneers—David Livingstone, John Williams, James Chalmers, and the like—the name of Wilfred Grenfell will be held in honourable remembrance.

The master motive of his life was religious. In this connexion he owed a debt to D. L. Moody. One of the triumphs of that great evangelist was that he captured some of the finest student minds in England. At his first meeting for students in Oxford, as the writer has been told by one who was present, there was a series of ribbald interruptions during the opening hymn and prayer. These continued at the reading of Scripture. Moody stopped, and said, 'You jeered at the hymn and at the prayer, and I said nothing, for these were the words of men. But now you jeer at the Word of God—I'd sooner play with FORKED LIGHTNING!' And at the words he suddenly flung both hands above his head with a dramatic quiver of all the fingers. Thereafter there was dead silence. Grenfell was impressed by Moody's brusque and businesslike

way when he heard him cut short a long-winded prayer with the words, 'Let us sing a hymn while our brother finishes his prayer.' Long afterwards Grenfell said, 'What I now believe that D. L. Moody did for me was just to show that under all the shams and externals of religion was a vital call in the world for things that I could do. . . . He helped me to see myself as God sees the "unprofitable servant," and to be ashamed. He started me working for all I was worth, and made religion real fun—a new field brimming with opportunities.'

From this beginning there was never to be any turning back. It was John McKenzie, the famous African missionary, who said he had derived 'much strength and encouragement from the thought that the Lord will help the *resolved* man.' Grenfell was a 'resolved man,' if ever there was one, and he was abundantly helped. Before he took up his life's work in Labrador he had served a useful apprenticeship in Christian service at home. He had tried his hand at taming the rough boys in a London slum, striving to instil into them by word and example the first principles of Christian manhood. Later, at the suggestion of Sir Frederick Treves, he had gone as doctor on a mission ship to work among the deep-sea fishermen in the North Sea. From this to the greater work in Labrador was a natural transition.

So at least it seemed to Grenfell. No idea of the sacrifice of a home career crossed his mind. No thought of the hardships to be endured and the rough life to be lived proved any deterrent, but rather the contrary. 'Some of my older friends,' he wrote, 'have thought that my decision to go was made under strong religious excitement, and in response to some deep-seated conviction that material sacrifices or physical discomforts commended one to God. I must, however, disclaim all such lofty motives. I have always believed that the Good Samaritan went across the road to the wounded man just because he wanted to. I do not believe that he felt any sacrifice or fear in the matter. If he did, I know very well that I did not. On the contrary, there is everything about such a venture to attract my type of mind, and making preparations for the long voyage was an unmitigated delight.'

The record of his voyages, toils, and adventures in wild and freezing Labrador makes an epic worthy to be set beside Livingstone's tremendous journeys in Africa. Not even the barest sketch of them can be given here, but the story is sufficiently well known. Especially, one may say, 'every schoolboy knows' the story of that well-nigh fatal drift on the ice-floe with his sleigh and faithful team of dogs when he had to kill three of them to wrap himself in their skins against the freezing gale and make a flagstaff of their leg bones on which to hoist his shirt. This was but one episode in his life of adventure. Under such fearful conditions he brought healing and help to many sufferers by sea and land, fought consumption and malnutrition, performed desperate operations in strange places and in rough and ready ways. Always with indomitable spirit and gallant gaiety. 'One day a father of eight children sent in from a neighbouring island for immediate help. His gun had gone off while his hand was on the muzzle, and practically blown it to pieces. . . . To stop the bleeding he had plunged his hand into a flour barrel and then tied it up in a bag. As a result the wounded arm was poisoned way up above the elbow. . . . We took chances on bone-grafting to form a hand, and he was left with a flipper like a seal's, able, however, to oppose one long index finger and "nip a line" when he fished. But there was no skin on it. So Dr. Beattie and I shared the honours of supplying some. Pat—for that was his name—has been a veritable apostle of the hospital ever since, and has undoubtedly been the means of enabling others to risk the danger of our suspected proselytizing. For though he had English Episcopal skin on the palm of his hand and Scotch Presbyterian skin on the back, the rest of him still remained a devout Roman Catholic.'

Grenfell gave a wide interpretation to his commission. He fought the liquor trade which was making havoc in trading stations up and down the coast, and as he said, 'I thanked God who had made "my hands to war, and my fingers to fight," when that is the only way to resist the Devil successfully and to hasten the kingdom of peace.' He fought the low traders who were defrauding the trappers and entangling them in debt. Any scheme which could in any wise help in the physical, moral, or spiritual uplift of the people had his energetic support. He was a great organizer and had many irons in the fire. He set up hospitals, schools, and an orphanage; he initiated a co-operative movement; he started a mill and a fox farm; he introduced reindeer to the country. And with it all, the magnetism of his character and of his appeals drew other workers to the field and brought funds from America and Britain to support the work. In consequence, when the time came for him to lay down his task, he left behind him a well-organized mission which is likely to be of enduring value to the toilers of Labrador. Now that he rests from his labours his works do follow him. His life was a great venture of faith which found itself confirmed in experience. As he wrote in his book, *What Christ Means to Me*, 'It is not extraordinary that

we must begin with faith. . . . It cannot be foregone. We cannot live without it. We cannot make any progress without it. No faith, no business ; no faith, no fun ; no faith, no victory. But we can make Christ's faith knowledge in the same way that we can make it in any other realm, that is by testing it in the laboratory. . . . The will to believe is essential. Experience alone will make it knowledge, or as Christ put it, " Follow Me and you shall have the light of life " . . . I am not sure that I am sitting here, but I am so convinced that treading in the footsteps of Christ explains the meaning of life, that even when I fail, not a shadow of doubt about it softens my sense of regret and self-condemnation.'

Bewildering Cares.

These bewildering cares
Which weigh us down who live and earn
our bread,

wrote William Morris. *Bewildering Cares* is a good title for Winifred Peck's account of ' A Week in the Life of a Clergyman's Wife ' (Faber & Faber ; 7s. 6d. net). She has created a delightful heroine in Camilla Lacely, the wife of the Vicar of Saint Simon's, Stampfield, North Midlandshire (Stampfield, pop. 60,000 : Market-day Thursday). A comparison with E. M. Delafield's ' The Diary of a Provincial Lady ' is inevitable. It is enough to say that this makes an excellent companion volume, full of kindly, pungent humour.

Camilla Lacely is no more the typical wife of the vicar of fiction than her husband is the typical vicar of fiction. ' I must insist at once that Arthur, though a Vicar, is tall, dark, as scrupulously clean-shaven as our defective hot-water system allows him to be, and has a delightful way of looking over his spectacles at any acquaintance as if he or she were the one person in the world worth talking to. . . . On the one side, he is invariably incapable of regarding theological or party problems with anything but detached tolerance, and cannot begin to understand the pettiness or narrowness of the provincial middle-class mind. And on the other, he finds his work among the factory-hands and the out-of-works in the parish so enthralling that I have frequently to remind him that even women have souls to be saved, and that even elderly Church workers need a little attention.'

From all the characters which Miss Peck has drawn so successfully Mrs. Pratt, the wife of the Archdeacon, and Mrs. Eardley-Gage, the wife of the Rector of the Parish Church, stand out. Mrs. Pratt is inclined to think that Mrs. Lacely should take a more positive stand in a difficulty which has arisen over a strong pacifist sermon preached by the curate. To Mrs. Lacely's suggestion, ' I think I must leave the whole question to my husband,' Mrs. Pratt replies, ' " I don't agree in the least. It is our duty to stand as rocks behind our husbands " (I hoped this simile was not suggested by one of Kate's stony buns) " and to present a united front. . . . Adela and I sometimes fear you are a little wanting in *method*, you know. I don't think you would look so tired and thin if you planned your days better. I have every hour accounted for in my book from ten in the morning to seven in the evening, so I have no rush or confusion."

' I didn't like to make her feel uncomfortable by suggesting that my day usually starts at seven o'clock, but I did protest that engagements don't always last as short a time as one hopes. Punctuality, said Mrs. Pratt, is the politeness of princes, and left me, after prolonged good-byes, on the doorstep, with just five minutes to race to our parish hall for the Quarterly Meeting of the Mothers' Union.'

Mrs. Eardley-Gage is a charming, willowy, ethereal-looking woman. It is at her home—the Old Rectory—that a retreat is held for the wives of the clergy. To her dismay Mrs. Lacely finds how difficult it is to concentrate. ' Father Merrion, who was in charge of our retreat, urged us at this point, in the quiet hushed whisper which suited his ascetic face and figure so well, to remember that it is a danger in meditation to become too wholly detached from the conscious, thinking self. Great care, he emphasized, must be taken in emptying the intellect, to listen only to the Interior Voice until we are sure of our spiritual armour. With this warning to my conscious mind I was indeed horrified to discover that I had spent the first few minutes in trying to discover the Rector as a chubby schoolboy in a Radley group, in remembering with horror that I hadn't ordered enough fish to do for kedgeree on Sunday morning as well as supper to-night. . . . It is very strange and shame-making to possess, in my profession, a mind that will not turn to order to holy things. When I am out for a walk, or visiting some of the poor people I love, or alone in my bedroom, I do sometimes feel conscious of all that spiritual world in the fourth dimension just beyond our vision or conscious apprehension. And I don't think I ever see a sudden view of hills beyond our street, or a tree in blossom, or tulips in massed colours on a barrow without remembering Francis Thompson's words : " Sworn to poverty he forswore not beauty, but worshipped through the lamp beauty, the Light, God." And in my visits to the Hospital and my friends in my district, how often I

recall words of a war poet, which, said Arthur, came to him like a vision on the way to Damascus :

> We that have seen man broken
> We know man is divine.'

Father Merrion speaks on, should we pray for victory. Mrs. Laceley asks, ' " But shouldn't we feel our own children very affected and insincere if they came to us and asked for everything except the thing they really wished ? " As usual my voice rose and my eyes grew moist, but Mrs. Gage cast me a glance of approval. Nothing, as we all know, is so daunting as the moment when an audience is pressed to ask questions and sits dumb in embarrassed silence.

' " But is victory what we all want *most* ? " asked Father Merrion kindly but disapprovingly.

' " Surely," said Mrs. Pratt briskly and rather officially. " What we desire most is the coming of God's Kingdom upon earth."

' " Well, as far as we can see, that's what we are fighting for—freedom of speech and freedom to worship God," put in Mrs. Stead, who has, I remembered, a son in the Air Force.

' " I pray for victory, and peace on that condition," announced old Mrs. Cummings, majestically.

' " I pray so much for our enemies," said Mrs. Gage, leaning forward more intently than ever, and crossing her thin beautiful ankles. " I pray daily for Thy child Hitler, Thy son von Ribbentrop and Thy child Stalin. You don't know how it *helps*." '

' It is a beautiful thought but the condescension of it rather took away my breath.'

Japanese Good Samaritan !

The United Society for Christian Literature helps to maintain in Japan a Christian News Agency with a daily Christian news-service to the secular press. Here is a story told by the Agency : ' Some time ago in China a village pastor answered a knock on his door and found a Japanese soldier with a Chinese woman outside. He had seen much of Japanese methods and was, therefore, amazed when this enemy soldier said to him, " This woman is in great danger so I bring her to you for safety. I, too, am a Christian." '

Tolerance.

In a recent article Miss Dorothy Thompson wrote : ' To care about anything is to be quaintly ridiculous. Tolerance has been the watchword—that tolerance which comes of believing in nothing, loving nothing, hating nothing, the incapacity for indignation or enthusiasm, the paralysis of action—the tolerance which means that faith has gone out of the human heart and conviction out of the mind.'

Lord Halifax and Bikaner.

In a short article, with the title ' A New Start in Bikaner ' in the October number of *Life and Work*, the editor, the Rev. George Carstairs writes : ' Of the twenty-odd States of which Rajputana is composed, the second largest—two-thirds the size of Scotland—is the State of Bikaner. . . . In course of time the American Methodist Episcopal Mission opened up work in Bikaner, though without locating a missionary in the State. There were a few converts but only scanty means of training or educating them. Nine or ten years ago that Mission was compelled, by financial stringency, to withdraw its workers ; and four years ago there was talk of our mission being asked to take over responsibility for the work there.

' In January 1937 the Rev. J. W. Drummond of Ajmer paid a fortnight's visit to Bikaner in order to survey the ground and report. He found that of the former converts some had lapsed through lack of shepherding, some showed touching loyalty in difficult circumstances, and all were in great need of Christian training and education. But to his amazement what he found in Bikaner, was a fine church ; and he tells the story of its building as it was told to him. " When the late Viceroy, Lord Irwin (now Lord Halifax), was on a visit to Bikaner, a ' shoot ' was arranged for his entertainment on Sunday. But he said he did not shoot on Sunday, he went to church. So a service was arranged in a bungalow or guest-house. After his departure the Maharajah, feeling that his inability to provide a place of worship had been a failure in hospitality to his guest, built a church for the use of all Christians." '

'The Expository Times.'

A reader, giving up his house, generously offers a number of unbound recent volumes of the magazine. These will be sent to the first person applying, postage to be paid.

Errata.

In the August number p. 510, column 2, ' John Caird ' is inadvertently described as ' Master of Balliol.' It was, of course, his brother, Edward, who held that position.

In the October number, p. 11, column 1, line 45, for ' ending up ' please read ' girding up.'

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